

The Vision for Eight Ash Green is that it should remain a small village located in a rural setting, mainly consisting of residential dwellings interspersed with open farmland but also containing some small business premises. Eight Ash Green should continue to enjoy wide open spaces within the village with uninterrupted views of the countryside. It should remain clearly separated from other nearby villages - it is not and should not become a suburb of either Stanway, Colchester or the proposed West Tey Garden Community/New Town.

Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan 2017 – 2033
Date: November 2019

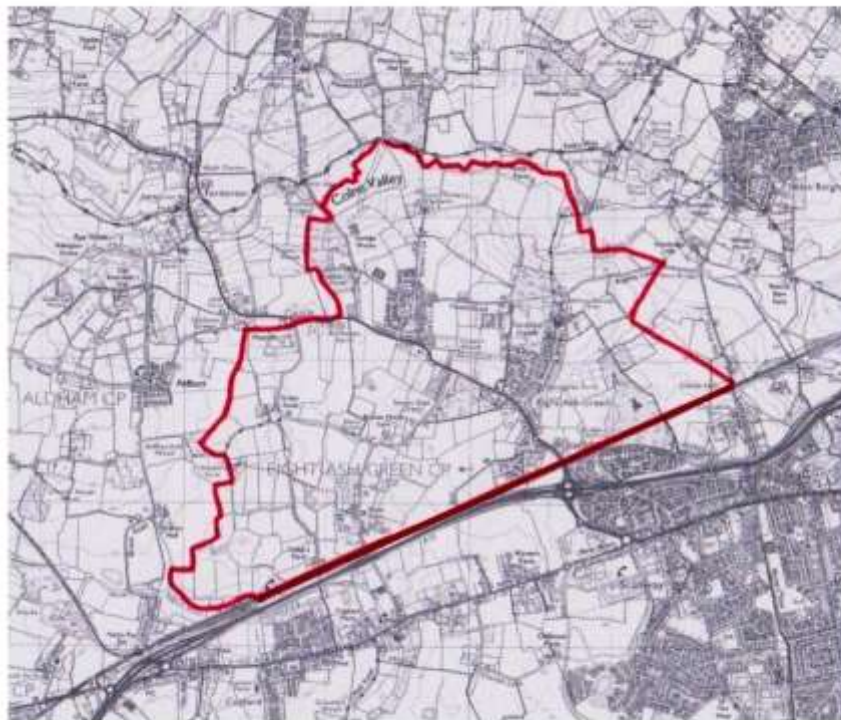
Contents

1. Foreword	3
2. Introduction	5
3. The Parish of Eight Ash Green	7
4. Key issues for Eight Ash Green and Vision Statement	11
5. Background	12
6. In detail, what does the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan do?.....	14
7. Consultation and process	16
8. The future provision of additional housing in the village	19
9. Neighbourhood Plan Objectives and Policies	20
a. Village Settlement Boundary	20
b. Fiddlers Field (formerly Site 226) development	23
c. Future domestic housing	36
d. Environment	38
e. Heritage	49
f. Natural resources and renewable energy	56
g. Local businesses	58
h. Community amenities	62
10. Habitat Regulations Assessment	65
11. Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Area Policies Map.....	67
12. Supporting documents	68
13. Key milestones, next steps and monitoring	69
14. Annexes	70
a. Annex A – Members of the Neighbourhood Plan Group and acknowledgments	
b. Annex B – Illustrative Housing Mix	
c. Annex C - Projects	

Foreword

1.1 Following over three years of work by the Neighbourhood Plan Group, this document represents the Neighbourhood Plan for Eight Ash Green in respect of the period 2017 – 2033. It covers the area within our parish boundary including the distinct communities of Eight Ash Green, Fordham Heath, Daisy Green, Lexden Heath and Seven Star Green. – see below. Colchester Borough Council approved this designation in June 2015.

Map of the Eight Ash Green 'Neighbourhood Area'



1.2 In developing the Plan, wide ranging and continuous consultation has taken place both informally and formally to include the Parish Council, the villagers of the Parish, landowners/agents and business owners working in close liaison with Colchester Borough Council. Advice has also been sought from Colchester Borough Council; the Rural Community Council for Essex and a very experienced town planner who has examined some 50 neighbourhood plans and Health Checks for Neighbourhood Plan groups. Full details are set out in the Consultation Statement available at www.eightashgreen.net

1.3 The outcome from the six week (42 days) consultation of v26 of the Neighbourhood Plan (12th February 00.00 – 25th March 2018 24.00), undertaken under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations 2012, showed over 90 per cent of the villagers fully supported the Plan and its contents, with 633 hits on the website, 177 hits on the comments form and 70 comments form completed. Detailed comments and observations from this exercise can be found in the Consultation Statement and have been incorporated in the Plan where appropriate.

1.4 The very strong measure of support from the village not only for the Plan itself but also the Objectives and Policies, reflects the extensive consultation process undertaken, as reflected in Section 7 below.

Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan Group

Authorised by the Eight Ash Green Parish Council to prepare this Neighbourhood Plan

November 2019



Lower Fordham Heath

Introduction

2.1A Neighbourhood Plan sets out a vision for an area and the planning policies for the use and development of land. It forms part of the statutory planning framework. The policies and proposals contained within it will be used as a basis for the determination of planning applications. The Plan must be in conformity with the Government's National Planning Policy Framework and must satisfy the Basic Conditions which are:

- The policies, having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, are appropriate to make the Neighbourhood Plan.
- The plan contributes towards the achievement of sustainable development.
- The policies are in general conformity with the strategic policies in the Development Plan prepared by the Local Planning Authority.
- The Plan is compatible with and otherwise does not breach EU obligations.
- The making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 2007) (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects).

2.2 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with regard to the 2012 National Planning Policy Framework¹ as well as guidance set out in the National Planning Practice Guidance. The policies in the Neighbourhood Plan are in general conformity with the strategic policies in the adopted development plan which consists of the Core Strategy adopted in 2008 and amended in 2014, the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) adopted in 2010 and the Development Policies DPD adopted in 2010 and amended in 2014. Colchester Borough Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan 2017 - 2033. The general direction and policies of the emerging Local Plan have also been taken into account in preparing this Neighbourhood Plan.

¹ (March 2012) *National Planning Policy Framework*

2.3 In accordance with the notice given by the Eight Ash Green Parish Council to the Local Planning Authority on 15th June 2015, the area contained within the Parish boundary is designated as the formal Neighbourhood Area. The Parish Council is able to confirm that this is the only Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish.

2.4 A Neighbourhood Plan ensures communities play a greater role in determining the future of their area. Once it is adopted following a successful result at a local referendum, it becomes part of the statutory development plan. Together with the Local Plan prepared by Colchester Borough Council, the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, which relate to the development and use of land, will provide the statutory basis for the determination of planning applications (by Colchester Borough Council) in the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Area. Neighbourhood planning policies only affect development that requires a planning application. The Plan cannot therefore include projects that fall outside the remit of planning control. In the course of consulting the residents about the Neighbourhood Plan, a number of other issues arose that could not be included in the Plan as planning policies. These are dealt with in the 'Projects' section (see Annex C) and whilst these cannot be delivered by a Neighbourhood Plan, they are considered by the Parish Council as equally important to pursue.

2.5 In support of the Neighbourhood Plan, there are a number of documents which are available on line at www.eightashgreen.net². They include the Project Plan; the Basic Conditions Statement; the Consultation Statement; the Regulation 14 Process – Consultation – Outcomes document; the Evidence Base; the Village Settlement Boundary; the Site Selection process; and the Neighbourhood Plan Objectives and Policies - Supporting Evidence.

² www.eightashgreen.net

The Parish of Eight Ash Green

Brief History

3.1 The Parish of Eight Ash Green came into existence in 1947 taking land from the surrounding Parishes – 641 acres from Fordham, 844 acres from Copford, 125 acres from Stanway and 4 acres from Aldham. At the time, the population was approximately some 600 and the villagers were mainly involved in agriculture and local trades. There were scattered farms and cottages with two main dwelling areas around Fordham Heath as well as the crossroads by what was the Brick and Tile Public House. The Commons at Seven Star Green and Daisy Green were given to our Parish Council in 1973 by deed of gift by the Lord of the Manor of Copford.

Socio-economic profile

3.2 The current socio economic profile of the village shows:-

- Some 1,730 people live locally made up of 1,070 working age adults (62%); 295 children under age 16 (17%); and 365 people over age 65 (21%) - 2011 census³
- The majority who work are employed at locations outside the village. Agriculture is no longer a principal class of work. (responses to the 2017 questionnaire)⁴
- There are four distinct areas of residential housing:-
 - Spring Lane / Fordham Heath / Heathfields and Searle Way/The Walk and the Rise (medium density);
 - Wood Lane and adjacent cul de sacs (low density);
 - Fiddlers Folly/Porters Lane and Close (high density); &
 - Seven Star Green (low density).
- The 2017 physical survey of the village undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Group shows there are some 680 dwellings containing a mixture of housing types comprising:-

³ (2011) *Office for National Statistics Census*

⁴ (2017) *Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire*



- 252 detached houses (37%)
- 129 semi-detached houses (19%)
- 7 semi-detached bungalows (1%)
- 143 terraced houses (21%)
- 122 bungalows (18%)
- 27 flats (4%)

Key facilities and assets

3.3 Within the village is an ancient 36 acre Heath which is both a registered green and has common land status; an open, green landscape both internal and external to the village with several conservation areas; thirteen Grade 2 listed buildings; a public house; a village hall; a church; allotments; a hotel and leisure club; two dental surgeries; a play area for children; eight ponds that support a myriad of wildlife; an Ofsted rated good primary school; and recreation facilities by way of both a cricket and football pitch.

3.4 Assets within 5 kilometres include Colchester town with its multitude of shops and facilities; a good transport infrastructure with links via the A12 and the main London to Norwich rail line at Colchester and local rail services at Marks Tey station; the Stanway shopping and leisure facilities; three GP surgeries including a health centre; and good secondary and further education establishments.

The future

3.5 Following extensive consultations within the village, residents are prepared to accept 150 additional dwellings as outlined in the emerging Local Plan. This represents a twenty-two per cent uplift on the present housing stock but there is no desire to expand any further either in terms of the number of houses or building on any more land in the village during that plan period. That said, the intention is to welcome and integrate the newcomers to the village and way of life.

3.6 The overriding wish of the village is to remain a sustainable, quiet, rural Parish, which overlooks and is part of the beautiful Colne Valley to the north,

and is sited on the edge of, but not part of, Colchester/Stanway or the proposed West Tey Garden Community/ New Town.

Landscape Character of the village

3.7 The Colchester Borough Council Landscape Character Assessment⁵ provides a baseline inventory and description of the Borough's landscape character types and areas. "Character" is defined as a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that make each landscape (or townscape) different. Character is influenced by particular combinations of visual, ecological, historical, settlement, built components, and other intangible aspects such as tranquillity and sense of place.

3.8 The need to protect landscape character has been recognised by Essex County Council together with the need to protect the distinctive character of villages and countryside. The unique character of the village has been set out in the Eight Ash Green Village Design Statement of 2013⁶ refreshed by the responses to the questionnaire of spring 2017.

3.9 Regionally, Eight Ash Green is categorised as being in the North Thames Regional Character Area. In terms of the Essex County Character Areas, it is categorised as being in the E2 South Colchester Farmlands Area, nestled right up against the C7 Colne Valley Character Area to the north. See map below. It is described as being a "small linear village settlement" with its "setting providing visual and physical separation from Colchester".



Pond at bottom of Lower Heath

⁵ Chris Blandford Associates (2005) *Colchester Borough Landscape Character Assessment* – for Colchester Borough Council

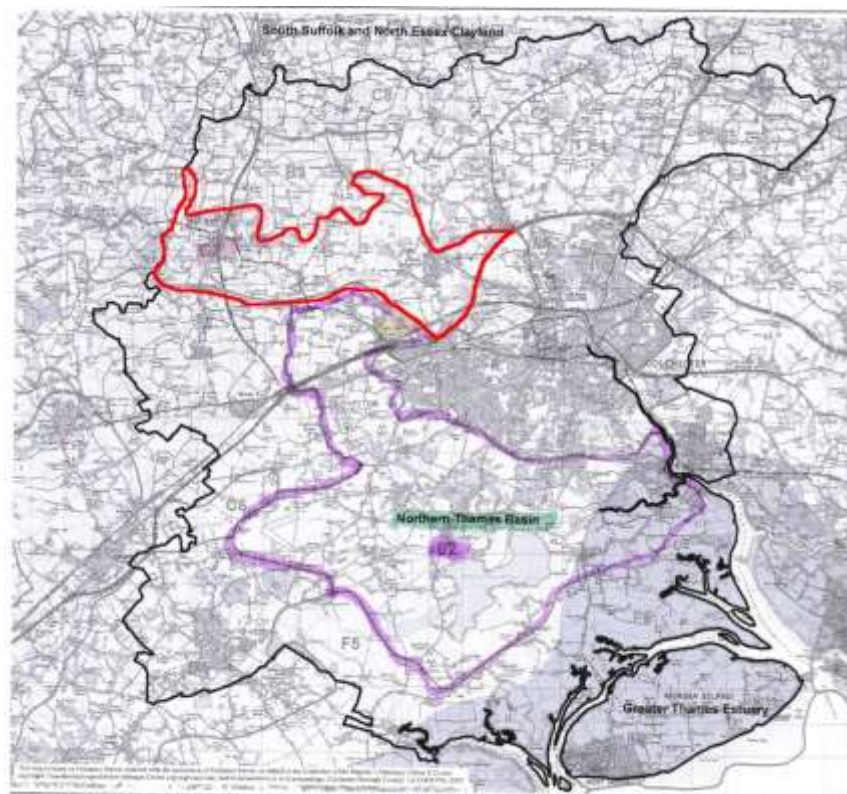
⁶ (July 2013) *Eight Ash Green Village Design Statement*

3.10 The village is based on sediments of sand and gravel as well as clay deposits and comprises a gently undulating broad plateau predominantly used for arable or improved pasture. It interspersed with woodland and natural habitats in an open environment that provides wildlife corridors, combined with an ancient 36 acre heath.

3.11 The community of Eight Ash Green greatly values the benefits of living in a truly rural village where it does not wish to become a suburb of Colchester as part of a creeping urban sprawl. Whilst the landscape does not merit the award of being an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, it is characterised by a lovely open feel with many natural features such as the Heath, mature trees and woods, ponds and fields lined with ancient hedgerows, footpaths and bridleways. These distinctive features are much valued by the community.

3.12 The Landscape Character Assessment recommends a landscape strategy that will preserve and enhance the distinctive character of villages and countryside. References to and support for such a strategy, are set out below in the appropriate Objectives and Policies sections.

Landscape Character Area



Colne Valley (Eight Ash Green) —

South Colchester Farmlands —

The key issues for Eight Ash Green and our Vision Statement

4.1 The key issues were identified from extensive meetings with villagers, businesses, landowners and the Parish Council, the responses to the 2017 questionnaire and local knowledge and include:-

- retaining the rural character of the village by protecting the environment – landscape/open spaces, thus helping to support nature conservation
- ensuring there is no coalescence with Stanway and/or Colchester or the proposed West Tey Garden Community/New Town i.e. the prevention of urban sprawl and urbanisation of the village
- providing high quality housing with good design and layout on a site chosen by the villagers.

4.2 These are reflected in the Vision Statement for the village:-

The Vision for Eight Ash Green is that it should remain a small village located in a rural setting, mainly consisting of residential dwellings interspersed with open farmland but also containing some small business premises. Eight Ash Green should continue to enjoy wide open spaces within the village with uninterrupted views of the countryside. It should remain clearly separated from other nearby villages - it is not and should not become a suburb of either Stanway, Colchester or the proposed West Tey Garden Community/New Town.

4.3 Other key issues which are important include:-

- encouraging the domestic use of green energy
- looking after the biodiversity present in the village
- jobs – encouraging local employment/businesses and the best use of land
- having effective and convenient transport links in the village
- valuing the local heritage
- the provision of effective wired broadband.

Background

5.1 In broad terms, what is the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan seeking to achieve?

- To define a new settlement boundary for the village;
- To set out an overarching Vision for the locality underpinned by a broad set of Objectives and detailed Policies on the development and use of land both for domestic properties and for businesses;
- To identify how and where in Eight Ash Green, growth proposed in the emerging Local Plan for Colchester is to be met; and
- To set out how the residents of Eight Ash Green would like to see their community develop and prosper in a sustainable way over a particular time frame of 2017 to 2033.

5.2 What are the issues the villagers of Eight Ash Green are seeking to address in the Plan?

Fundamentally, there are four issues:-

- First, how to preserve all that is good about living in a small rural village, the latter being an important factor as to why people like living in Eight Ash Green;
- Second, how to play a responsible part in the continuing growth of the Borough of Colchester;
- Third, how to ensure that over the proposed Local Plan period of 2017 to 2033, future development is managed to ensure 150 dwellings are built on a location chosen by the villagers; and
- Fourth, to encourage more small businesses into the village with the aim of expanding the opportunities for local employment.

5.3 How does the Neighbourhood Plan link with the emerging Colchester Borough Council Local Plan?

- Section 3 of the Basic Conditions Statement explains how this Neighbourhood Plan fully conforms to the current Colchester Borough Council's Core Strategy Policies as set out in the 2014 Focussed Review.
- Colchester Borough Council is in the throes of producing a Local Plan that will set out the future development of the Borough over their

plan period of 2017 – 2033 which will include the vision and strategic objectives for Colchester as a whole. As part of this process, it will detail the policies for those areas identified as having the capacity to help deliver the future growth of the population. The Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan will deliver 150 new dwellings, thereby contributing to the Borough's wider housing target of 18,400 new dwellings. The Neighbourhood Plan will also seek to deliver a range of supporting infrastructure needed to ensure that all new growth is as sustainable as possible.

5.4 What does the Publication draft of the proposed Local Plan⁷ for Colchester say about Eight Ash Green?

- Paragraph 6.161 says “A preferred site for development in Eight Ash Green has been identified by the Neighbourhood Plan Group through consultation with the local community”.
- The Local Plan Policy SS5 describes the proposals for Eight Ash Green in which it states that the Neighbourhood Plan will:-
 - Define the extent of a new Settlement Development Boundary for Eight Ash Green
 - Allocate a preferred site(s) for 150 dwellings in Eight Ash Green
 - Set out any associated policies needed to support the site allocation i.e. housing mix, type of new housing and density for each site allocated for housing
 - The Neighbourhood Plan will also set out the policy framework to guide the delivery of any infrastructure/ community facilities required to support the development.

⁷ (May 2017) *The publication Draft stage of the Colchester Borough Council Local Plan 2017 - 2033*

In detail, what does the Neighbourhood Plan do?

6.1 The various elements set out below reflect the strongly held views of the villagers and what they want to see happen in the village. They were obtained by way of village meetings, responses to the 2017 questionnaire, surveys carried out by the Neighbourhood Plan Group and the Regulation 14 consultation exercise.

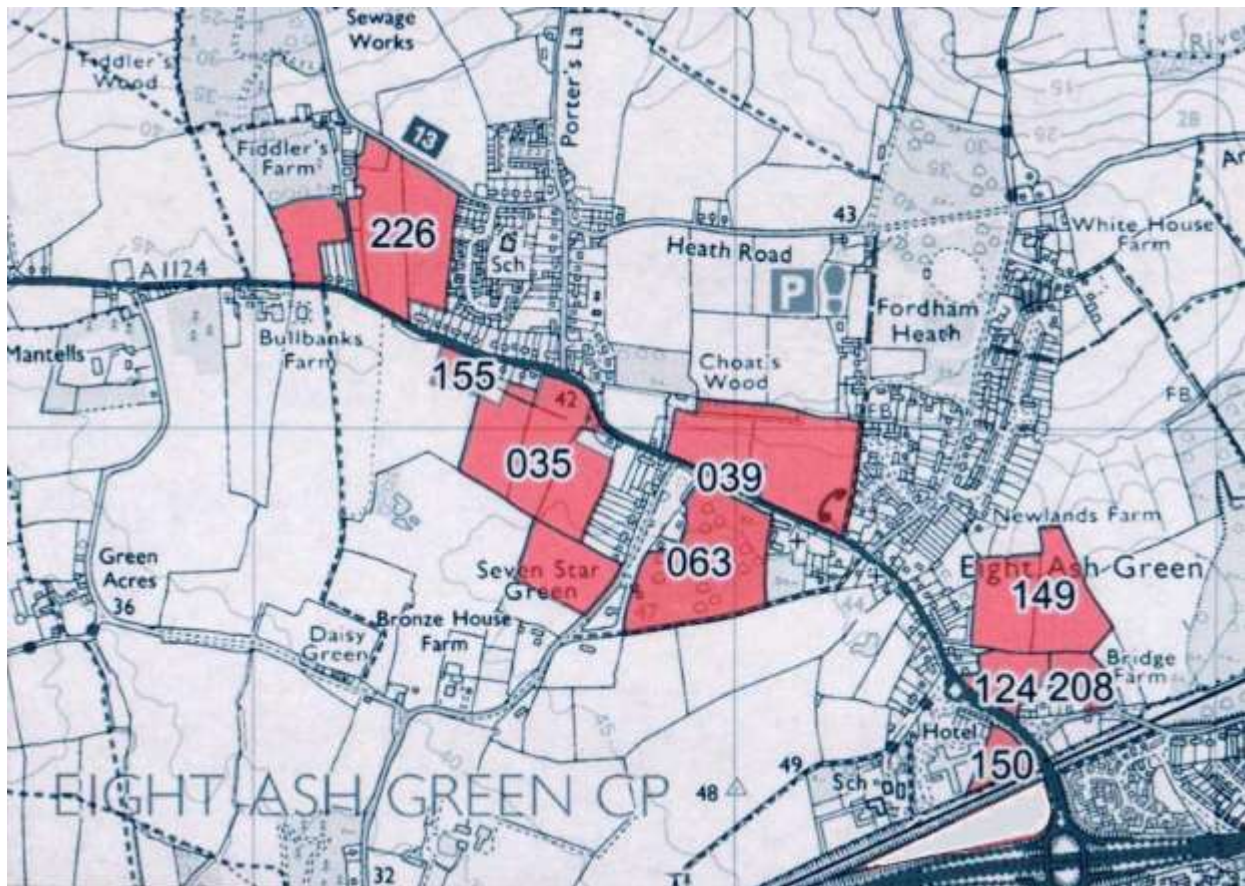
Subject	NP Policy	What does it do?
Housing	FF 2-3 DH1	Provides for an increase and mixture of residential dwellings of no more than 2 storeys high, for first time buyers, downsizers, families and executives by way of a medium density with reference to a percentage of affordable housing
Design	FF 2	Provides for the layout and design to be compatible with the character and context of the village
Environment	FF4	Provides for a new direct access road across Fiddlers Field
	FF 8 DH1	Provides for wiring to be installed to allow for charging of electric vehicles
	FF 8 DH1	Provides for storage of renewable energy
	FF 7, EP5	Provides for mitigation of any potential flooding
	FF 6	Provides for improved landscaping and noise reduction measures
	FF 5	Proposes a new footpath linking the new estate with the local primary school
	EP1	Provides for retention of existing gap between Eight Ash Green and other settlements
	EP2	Provides for protection of green spaces
	EP3	Provides for protection for hedgerows
	EP4	Provides for protection and enhancement of footpaths, cycle and bridleways
	RE 1-2	Provides for efficient use of the Earth's natural resources
	Her1	Provides for any listed building or Heritage Asset to be maintained or where possible enhanced to protect from any future

		development
Business	BP1	Provides for the provision of a Designated Business area
Transport	FF 5	Proposes two new bus stops
Connectivity	FF 8 DH1	Provides for access to the internet
Roads and pavements	FF 4 -5 DH1	Provides for a new access road coupled with an improved pavement along the A1124
Community amenities	FF 9 CS1	Provides for a new play area and recreational routes Designates land for a new village community hub/hall
	Projects	
	Environment Business Infrastructure Roads Education Comms Land Safety Access and Leisure	Support for wildlife Support for the local economy – business Protection for the rural nature of village Promotion of safety for the local primary school Support for the local primary school Provision of superfast broadband Promotion of maintenance of land and parking Promotion for modern street lighting Maintenance of sports pitches; dog poo bins; National Cycle Route No 13 – dedicated cycle network and stands; footpaths and bridleways; the annual Music Festival

Consultation and process

7.1 Development of the Plan throughout its whole process has been based on continuous consultation with a wide variety of different parties with a particular focus on the villagers. Full details are contained in the Consultation Statement but broadly speaking, these were the main steps:-

- Following the decision taken by the Parish Council in February 2015 to produce a Plan, a Neighbourhood Plan Group was formed (see Annex A)
- The Group then undertook a wide programme of work (full details are contained in our Project Plan and Consultation Statement both of which are available on the Neighbourhood Plan website) to:
 - obtain agreement of Colchester Borough Council of the Designated Area for the Neighbourhood Plan (the Parish boundary)
 - obtain the necessary funds at various stages to support the programme of work
 - draw up a list of potential stakeholders
 - undertake a physical housing survey to establish the number, type and location of all the houses currently in the village
 - undertake a physical survey of the nine potential sites put forward as part of the Colchester Borough Council Call for Sites programme (see below) as well as three other possible sites identified by Colchester Borough Council but not put forward by the respective landowners
- meet with and fully consult with all the landowners and/or agents for the 9 Call for Sites localities
 - audit the existing infrastructure in the village
 - create a profile of the area
 - meet with various businesses/owner in the village
 - meet with the local farmers
 - carry out (3) surveys, to include an assessment of all the sites being put forward for development; the number and location of houses in the village; as well as obtaining details of the traffic survey carried out by Essex County Council



MAP OF EIGHT ASH GREEN

showing the nine Call for Sites localities.
(Site 226 now know as “Fiddlers Field”)

- gather the evidence required from local stakeholders e.g. health, education, transport, the church
- consult the villagers as appropriate by way of (3) focus group meetings, (11) open village meetings (e.g. 254/102 villagers attended) as well as (3) home visits and displays at (3) village festivals, all the while keeping them informed of progress e.g. (12) flyers – updates delivered to every household; (11) articles in the village newsletter delivered to every household; and (14) regular updates to the Neighbourhood Plan website
- hold an Annual Public Meeting every year (3) to remind villagers about progress over the previous year; to seek their views and answer questions; and to set out the forthcoming programme of work

- distribute a questionnaire to every household to obtain the views of the villagers on a number of specific points (477 responses received equivalent to a 33 per cent response rate)
- continue close liaison with Colchester Borough Council throughout the whole process (18 meetings)
- establish a good working relationship with the Rural Community Council for Essex (participated in 7 training – network events) to include obtaining their neighbourhood profile of our village
- deliver (29) presentations/updates to the Parish Council to include the submission of 2 papers
- being mentioned (9) times in the local newspaper

The future provision of additional housing in the village

8.1 A number of steps have been taken to validate where the additional housing should be located in support of the emerging Local Plan. Full details are contained in the “Site Selection process” document available on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

Neighbourhood Plan Objectives and Policies

VILLAGE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY

Objective

To provide for a new Village Settlement Boundary for Eight Ash Green

Policy

VSB 1: The Village Settlement Boundary includes Fiddlers Field (formerly known as Site 226) and excludes land south of Seven Star Green, to the south of the A1124, as shown on the Village Boundary Map. On land outside the Village Settlement Boundary, there will be a general presumption against new development, unless it accords with the special circumstances set out in the Development Plan or the National Planning Policy Framework

Context

Colchester Borough Council undertook a Settlement Boundary Review⁸ as part of the evidence base for the proposed Local Plan 2017 - 2033. The Review makes reference to the development of a Neighbourhood Plan for Eight Ash Green; an appropriate level of growth of around 150 additional dwellings in the village; and site RNW67 – referred later on as Site 226 – now known as Fiddlers Field.

As mentioned in Section 5 above, the draft Local Plan Policy SS5 states the Neighbourhood Plan will “Define the extent of a new Settlement Development Boundary for Eight Ash Green”.

Intent

Although the proposed Local Plan has not yet been adopted, nevertheless, the Eight Ash Green Parish Council has long recognised and accepted that as a result of the exponential growth of the population in Colchester and surrounding localities, it is inevitable that additional housing will be developed

⁸ (July 2016) Colchester Borough Council Local Plan Settlement Boundary Review

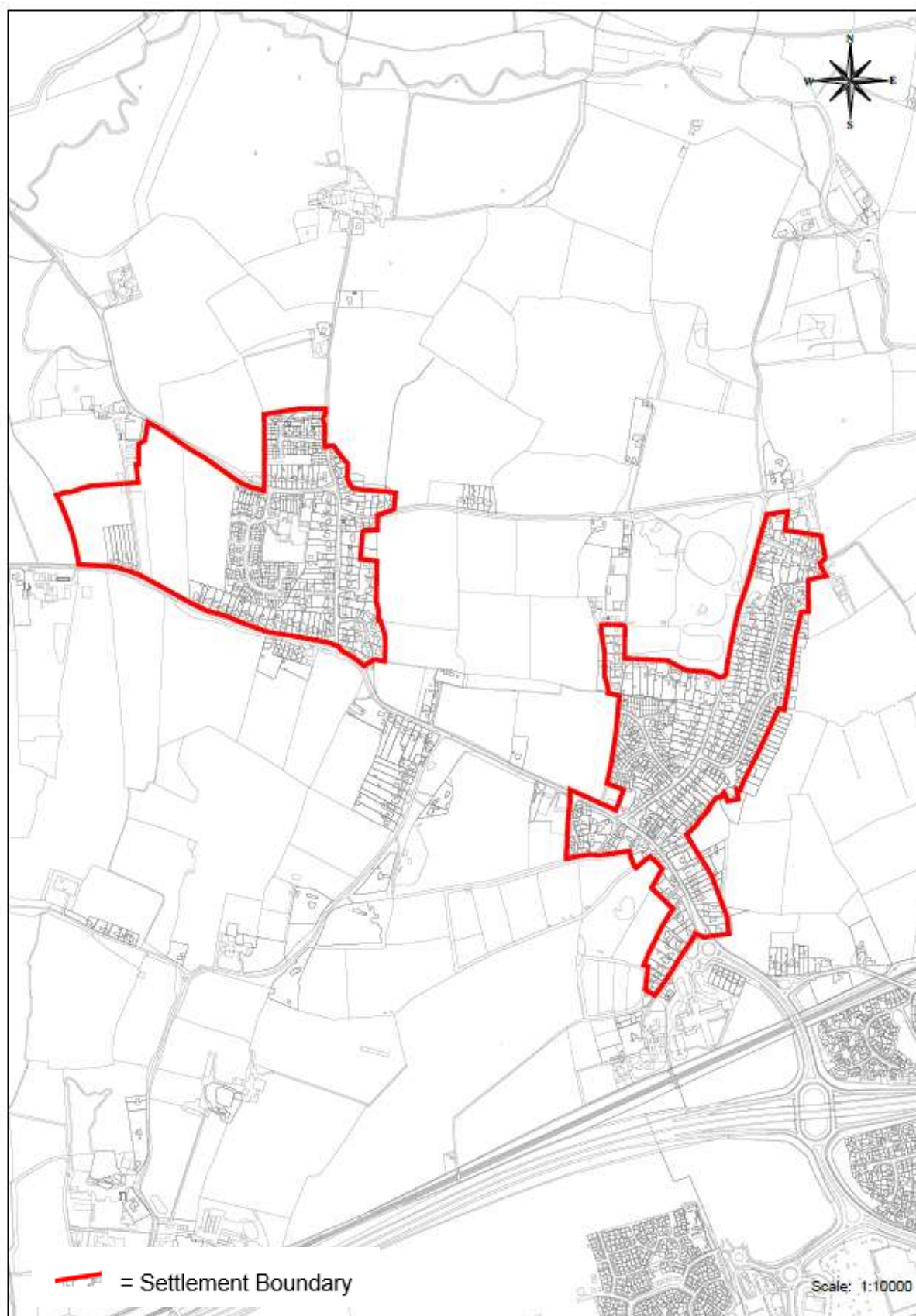
in the village at some stage in the future⁹, irrespective of the outcome of the proposed 2017-2033 Local Plan. As a consequence, the current Settlement Boundary will need to be extended in due course to accommodate further housing. Following consultations with the villagers about their preferred location for any potential future development, the Parish Council subsequently agreed to the extension of the Village Settlement Boundary to include the Fiddlers Field site¹⁰ - see below - therefore providing the opportunity for additional domestic housing to be built, in keeping with the existing dwellings in the village.

Further details can be found in the Village Settlement Boundary document available on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

⁹ (13th January 2016) *Eight Ash Green Parish Council meeting*

¹⁰ (8th February 2017) *Eight Ash Green Parish Council meeting*

Village Settlement Boundary Map



FIDDLERS FIELD DEVELOPMENT (FORMERLY SITE 226)

Objectives

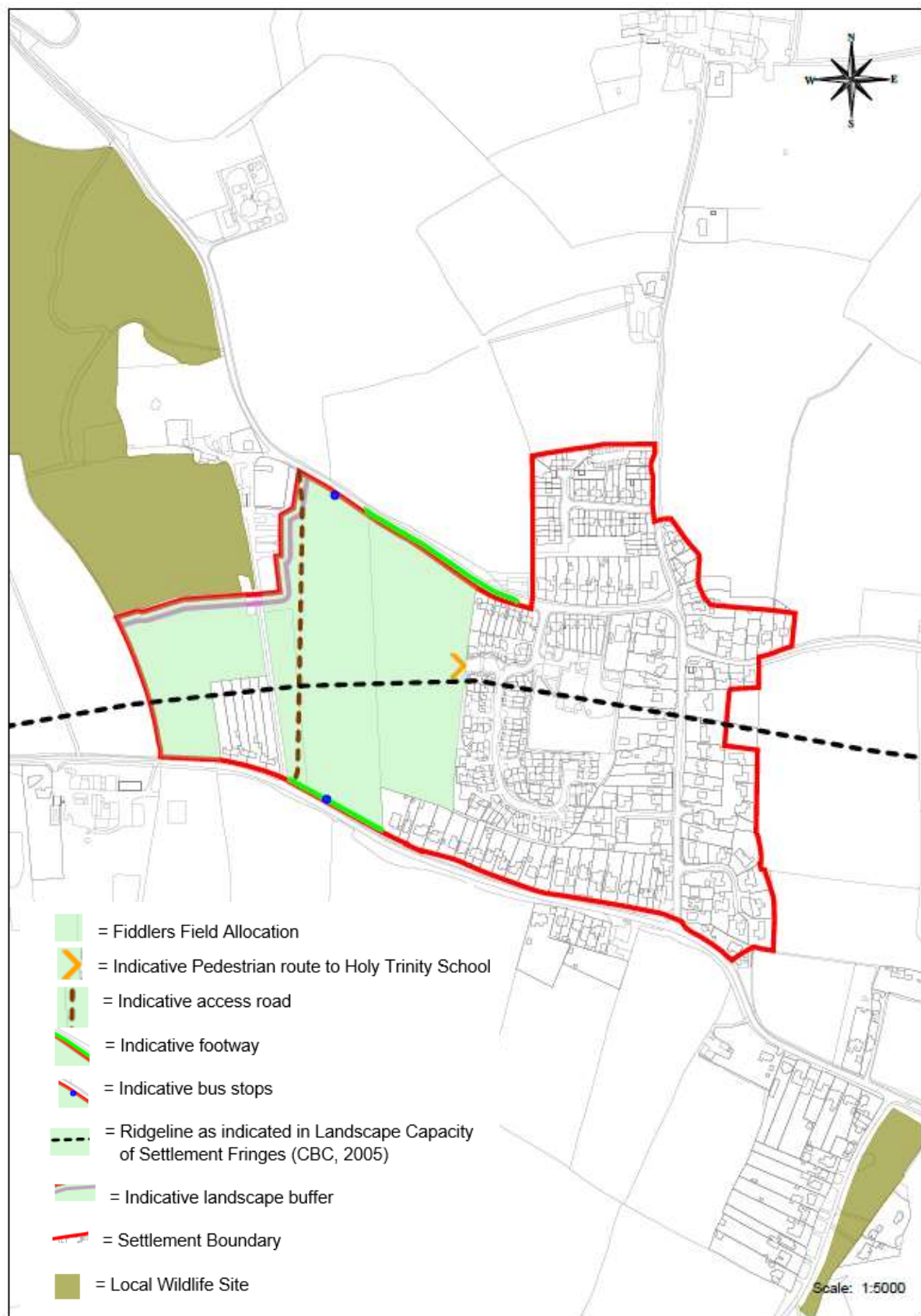
To provide for one new, single Strategic Site for development of 150 domestic dwellings as part of the emerging Colchester Borough Council Local Plan

To provide high quality housing that reflects the existing, distinct open character area of the village and meets the appropriate needs of the community both now and in the future

Policy

FF 1 – To designate Fiddlers Field as a single Strategic Site for the development of 150 dwellings as shown on the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map

Fiddlers Field Policy Map



Policy

Development proposals will be supported where it can be clearly demonstrated by way of relevant plans and supporting documents that they will provide:-

FF 2 – Up to 150 residential dwellings on Fiddlers Field with a layout of medium density and design to be compatible with the character and context of the village

FF 3 – A mix of residential dwellings comprising houses, bungalows and flats of no more than two storeys high which meet the evidenced housing needs of the village offering housing choice across the local housing market, including first time buyers, downsizers, families and executives. Proposals offering to deliver 30% affordable housing in accordance with the expectations of the emerging Local Plan will be supported

FF 4 - A new direct access road built to a standard which can accommodate HGV traffic and to the satisfaction of the local Highways Authority, will be provided directly linking Fiddlers Hill to the A1124 with access to the said road being provided by way of priority junctions

FF 5 – Proposals, including the following transport improvements, prepared in accordance with the Essex Design Guide¹¹ comprising:

- a) a new footway provided along the northern edge of the A1124 to connect the site to the village facilities;**
- b) a pedestrian through route linking to the Holy Trinity School and the Fiddlers Folly development; and**
- c) two new bus stops located on the A1124 within a safe and convenient distance of the site entrance, will be supported**

FF 6 – A suitable landscaping plan which provides screening to the existing businesses on Fiddlers Farm and adjacent houses, to include the Grade 2 listed Fiddlers Farmhouse, all of which border and limit any expansion of the site, to ensure that ambient noise and amenity currently enjoyed at these properties is maintained

¹¹ (2018) *Essex Design Guide, Highways Technical Manual*

FF 7 – A scheme demonstrating that appropriate surface water drainage is provided within the site conforming to the guidance within the Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide, published by Essex County Council, April 2016 and any subsequent revisions

FF 8 – Appropriate wiring to be installed within each property to provide for charging for electric cars/vehicles; and ducting for the provision of superfast broadband. Development proposals that demonstrate that the design and layout of dwellings on the site have the potential for the effective installation of sustainable battery pods that stores energy from renewable sources will be supported

FF 9 – a) Financial contributions will be required, as appropriate, from each developer of the Fiddlers Field site, as identified on Fiddlers Field Policy Plan, to mitigate the impact of new development by providing necessary community facilities, open space, transport infrastructure and other requirements to meet the community needs arising from the proposals including:

- * a recreational play area on the site;**
- * provision for open space to meet the recreational needs of the new residents including for dog walking;**
- * a contribution towards the delivery of a new community centre/hub;**
- * a contribution towards the expansion of the local primary school;**
- * a contribution towards the expansion of capacity of Junction 26 of the A12;**
- * safe, direct routes for walking and cycling and appropriate bus services to serve the new communities;**

b) financial contributions will be required, as appropriate, from each developer to fund additional healthcare, education and leisure services justified by reference to the Colchester Local Plan Adopted Focussed Review¹² Core Strategy Policy SD2 – Delivering facilities and infrastructure or subsequent adopted Local Plan policies relating to planning obligations over the life of the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan

FF 10 – Development proposals will make provision for a sufficient and accessible area of public open space within the Fiddlers Field site for public access, appropriately laid out with facilities for informal recreation and dog walking designed to avoid adversely affecting the Local Wildlife Site. Ownership of the open

¹² (2008) *Colchester Local Plan Adopted Focussed Review of the Core Strategy* and (2010), July 2014 *Development Policies*

space together with an appropriate commuted management and maintenance sum shall be transferred, for that purpose by the developer to the Parish Council or residents' association if established, at the discretion of the Parish Council, on occupation of the 135th dwelling

Context

Eight Ash Green is a small, quiet village with its own distinct open character made up not just of the open views to be found externally to the settlement, but also within the village, both of which reproduces a sense of spaciousness. There is a strong link here with the Landscape Character Assessment referred to in Section 3 above where "Character is influenced byother intangible aspects such as tranquillity and sense of place".

Having accepted that the village is to deliver 150 dwellings in support of the emerging Colchester Borough Council Local Plan, the primary question is where they should be located.

Intent

The intent behind the various elements of the Policy is to ensure they support the Objectives set out above. They do this by clarifying there is to be a single Strategic Site (Fiddlers Field) (FF 1) that is to accommodate the number of dwellings agreed with Colchester Borough Council (FF 2); the layout of the new housing to be in keeping with the character and context of the village (FF 2); the new development to accommodate the different types of housing (FF 3) to include having appropriate landscape measures (FF 6 and 9) that help to reinforce the rural nature of the village e.g. the protected Fiddlers Wood on the North West boundary of Fiddlers Field; and the provision of effective pedestrian and transport links (FF 5).

Supporting Evidence

Supporting Evidence for the Policies FF1-10 can be found in the “Neighbourhood Plan Objectives and Policies – Supporting Evidence” document available on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

FF1 – To designate Fiddlers Field as a single Strategic Site for the development of 150 dwellings as shown on the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map

Rationale

- As fully described in the Site Selection process document, as part of the democratic process, Fiddlers Field has become the Chosen Site by the villagers for future development in the village in support of the emerging Local Plan. The assessment of all the sites put forward for potential development, undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Group, fully supports the Fiddlers Field choice.
- Discussions with both the villagers and the Parish Council has shown that there is no appetite for the 150 houses to be built across numerous sites or plots around the village - the strong preference is for them to be built on a new single “strategic” site chosen by the villagers. The present estates are well defined with distinct boundaries and any extension to these could lead to the development of urban sprawl and/or ribbon development difficult to control coupled with additional traffic passing through the already busy estate roads, potentially posing a danger to children and/or elderly residents.

FF 2 – Up to 150 residential dwellings on Fiddlers Field with a layout of medium density and design to be compatible with the character and context of the village

Rationale

- Having an open layout to a development not only encourages wellbeing but also is more in keeping with living in Eight Ash Green which is a rural village with its wide open spaces nestled in the beautiful Essex countryside.

- Medium density housing is more in keeping with the feel of a rural village like Eight Ash Green whereas high density housing is more in keeping with an urban environment. See also paragraph 3.2 above which shows that three out of the four existing settlement areas in Eight Ash Green have medium or low density housing.

FF 3 – A mix of residential dwellings comprising houses, bungalows and flats of no more than two storeys high which meet the evidenced housing needs of the village offering housing choice across the local housing market, including first time buyers, downsizers, families and executives. Proposals offering to deliver 30% affordable housing in accordance with the expectations of the emerging Local Plan will be supported

Rationale

- The provision of a mixture of different types of housing not only contributes to the sustainability of a community providing the opportunity to meet and mix with other family units but it also provides a measure of choice for potential residents. In addition, a mixture will provide housing for first time buyers such as young people who want to get on the housing ladder and for elderly people to downsize and be able to continue to live within the village. Annex B provides an indicative housing mix providing broad ranges of the housing composition expected to be delivered to meet local need and demand at Eight Ash Green.
- Although the adopted Core Strategy expects the delivery of 20% affordable housing for site allocation of the scale anticipated at Fiddlers Field, the adopted Core Strategy policies are out of date in relation to the as yet unadopted Local Plan expectations and related evidence upon which the emerging policies are founded. Furthermore, the applicant for the long-standing planning proposals at Fiddlers Field for a proposal for 150 dwellings on this site, acknowledges and accepts that 30% affordable housing is acceptable together with a tenure mix of affordable rent and shared ownership dwellings as sought by the Borough Council. In relation to the tenure mix of affordable housing and shared ownership dwellings as sought by the Borough Council. In relation to the tenure mix of affordable housing to be delivered at Fiddlers Field, it is reasonable to expect the delivery of 30% affordable housing, (45 dwellings), of which, not less than 80% would be for affordable rent and no more than 20% for shared ownership.

- It is important that the new dwellings to be built on Fiddlers Field do not materially alter the character of the village (see for example details of the physical survey of the village carried out in 2017 as set out in Section 3.2 above) and an indication of both the type/number and style/number of properties that may be built on Site 226, reflecting the views of the villagers are set out in Annex B.
- Eight Ash Green is an open, rural village with plenty of open spaces and views. The construction of either very tall houses and/or high rise flats of more than 2 storeys would not only look odd but would not be in keeping with the current feel and look of the village.
- Another strong link with the Landscape Character Assessment referred to in Section 3 above is relevant here where Character is defined “as a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that make each landscape different”. The “consistent pattern of elements” referred to are that in the village, there are no dwellings more than two storeys high.

FF 4 - A new direct access road built to a standard which can accommodate HGV traffic and to the satisfaction of the local Highways Authority, will be provided directly linking Fiddlers Hill to the A1124 with access to the said road being provided by way of priority junctions

Rationale

- The key reasons why the villagers chose Fiddlers Field (in March & April 2016 and January 2017 and the 2017 Annual Public Meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Group) as their preferred option for future development, were:-
 - the proposed link road directly connecting the A1124 and Fiddlers Hill, thus taking traffic and HGVs in particular, away from the school at Fiddlers Folly and the dangerous bend by Porters Cottages; and
 - the proposed priority junctions by way of mini-roundabouts on the A1124 and Fiddlers Hill which in the case of the former, would have the ability to slow the traffic down – motorists are observed exceeding the 40mph speed limit on the A1124 and also ignoring the 30mph speed limit upon entering the village itself on the edge of Fiddlers Field

FF 5 – Proposals, including the following transport improvements, prepared in accordance with the Essex Design Guide¹³ comprising:

- a) a new footway provided along the northern edge of the A1124 to connect the site to the village facilities;*
- b) a pedestrian through route linking the Holy Trinity School and the Fiddlers Folly development; and*
- c) two new bus stops located on the A1124 within a safe and convenient distance of the site entrance, will be supported*

Rationale

- It is vital that pedestrians, particularly parents with children in prams/buggies, people using wheelchairs and/or the elderly are able to walk safely in the village alongside the road network, in the knowledge that they are doing so on a safe and stable surface, clearly separated from the nearby traffic. The current pavement that sits alongside the very busy A1124 and the Fiddlers Field site is both very low, narrow and is poorly maintained.
- It is anticipated by both the local primary school, and Essex County Council (which is planning for up to 45 new school places) that amongst the new residents of Fiddlers Field, there will be a number of young children who will be attending the local primary school Holy Trinity, located in Fiddlers Folly. At present, a pavement does extend from Fiddlers Folly along Fiddlers Hill but not as far as the anticipated new development which means that without a new pavement, parents and children would have to walk on the road to access the school. A new pedestrian route providing a connection between the existing pavement and the new development would not only mean a safe route for parents and children but also reduce the number of potential car journeys to and from Fiddlers Folly thus helping to reduce emissions.
- As the nearest bus stop to Fiddlers Field is some 200m away along the A1124 and some 80m to the east on Fiddlers Hill, the provision of new bus stops are important not just to encourage greater use of public transport, thus helping to reduce reliance on cars and reduce the carbon footprint, but also for elderly residents who may not either be able to walk 200m or do not have access to a car or no longer wish to drive.

¹³ Essex Design Guide 2018, Highways Technical Manual

- A new bus stop will also provide an improvement to access for services for residents of Fiddlers Folly.
- The A1124 is a very busy road with the need to ensure that the traffic flows freely and is not held up unnecessarily, possibly leading to drivers getting impatient and thereby taking risks and/or speeding to “make up lost time”. The provision of a designated bus stop only lay by will help in this regard.

FF 6 – A suitable landscaping plan which provides screening to the existing businesses on Fiddlers Farm and adjacent houses, to include the Grade 2 listed Fiddlers Farmhouse, all of which border and limit any expansion of the site, to ensure that ambient noise and amenity currently enjoyed at these properties is maintained

Rationale

- Some of the new domestic housing on Fiddlers Field will sit alongside the existing small commercial premises at Fiddlers Farm to the north, so the latter should be screened off from the new development. Such screening may include the planting of native hedgerows and/or trees so as to provide a natural, environmentally friendly buffer zone as well as appropriate aesthetic acoustic barriers.
- Domestic housing on Fiddlers Field will also sit alongside the existing houses located in both Fiddlers Folly (to the east) and Choats Cottages (to the south) so they should be screened off on the field boundary from the new development. Such screening may include the planting of native hedgerows and/or trees so as to provide a natural, environmentally friendly buffer zone.
- The aim is to protect a residential amenity and privacy so as to prevent undesirable overlooking, noise and dust disturbance and to encourage good neighbourliness.

FF 7 – A scheme demonstrating that appropriate surface water drainage is provided within the site conforming to the guidance within the Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide, published by Essex County Council¹⁴, April 2016 and any subsequent revisions

¹⁴ www.essex.gov.uk

Rationale

- At present, Fiddlers Field comprises open, uncultivated fields that have never been subject to flooding. However, with the prospect of 150 houses and a road network being built on the site, it will be prudent to ensure an appropriate draining system is incorporated into the development.

FF 8 – Appropriate wiring to be installed within each property to provide for charging for electric cars/vehicles; and ducting for the provision of superfast broadband. Development proposals that demonstrate that the design and layout of dwellings on the site have the potential for the effective installation of sustainable battery pods that stores energy from renewable sources will be supported

Rationale

- The installation of wiring that can lead to the provision of electric charging facilities represents a measure of “future proofing” whereby the Government and the car industry is encouraging/supporting the move toward more electronic/hybrid vehicles. For example, Volvo cars have announced they will only produce partially or fully battery powered vehicles by 2019 and Jaguar/Land Rover have said the same but from 2020 onwards.¹⁵
- There is no additional burden here as the installation of appropriate wiring for the potential provision of external electric charging facilities can be accommodated as part and parcel of the general wiring provision for any new dwelling e.g. for lights, power etc.
- High speed broadband is necessary for domestic properties, both for leisure purposes and to enable people to work from home.
- There is no additional burden here as ducting can be installed as part and parcel of the build of any new dwelling.
- Sustainable battery pods are being developed as a way to store energy for the future and their introduction into domestic housing would be welcomed and supported. Recent studies released during the preparation of the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan have demonstrated the expected growth in demand for sustainable residential renewable energy and storage systems in the UK. To

¹⁵ (23rd October 2017) *BBC News* and (25th March 2018) *the Sunday Times*

encourage this more sustainable form of development and to allow households to exercise greater choice over future domestic energy supply and storage, development proposals at Fiddlers Field will be expected to demonstrate how site layout, orientation and housing design will facilitate the effective installation of this technology. This may be provided in the Design and Access statement forming part of the planning application, or through a separate energy statement forming part of the planning application.

FF 9 – a) Financial contributions will be required, as appropriate, from each developer of the Fiddlers Field site as identified on Fiddlers Field Policy Plan, to mitigate the impact of the new development by providing necessary community facilities, open space, transport infrastructure and other requirements to meet the community needs arising from the proposals, including:

** a recreational play area on the site;*

** provision for open space to meet the recreational needs of the new residents including for dog walking;*

** a contribution towards the delivery of a new community centre/hub;*

** a contribution towards the expansion of the local primary school;*

** a contribution towards the expansion of capacity of Junction 26 of the A12;*

** safe, direct routes for walking and cycling and appropriate bus services to serve the new communities;*

b) financial contributions will be required, as appropriate, from each developer to fund additional healthcare, education and leisure services justified by reference to the Colchester Local Plan Adopted Focussed Review ¹⁶Core Strategy Policy SD2 – delivering facilities and infrastructure or subsequent adopted Local Plan policies relating to planning obligations over the life of the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan

Rationale

- Financial contributions from each developer are about providing support for measures that will encourage sustainability and bio-diversity, helping to mitigate the impact of building new homes. One example of this is the need to ensure the residents of the new development on Fiddlers Field

¹⁶ Colchester Local Plan Adopted Focused Review of the Core Strategy (2008) and Development Policies (2010), July 2014

have access to a green open space on the site to include a recreational play area rather than having to access the existing facilities on the Heath which is one kilometre away as the crow flies. The items shown in Policy FF 9 help achieve such goals.

FF 10 – Development proposals will make provision for a sufficient and accessible area of public open space within the Fiddlers Field site for public access, appropriately laid out with facilities for informal recreation and dog walking designed to avoid adversely affecting the Local Wildlife Site. Ownership of the open space together with an appropriate commuted management and maintenance sum shall be transferred, for that purpose by the developer to the Parish Council or residents' association if established, at the discretion of the Parish Council, on occupation of the 135th dwelling

Rationale

- During the preparation of the Strategic Environment Assessment in conjunction with the Appropriate Assessment Report for the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan compiled in January 2019, it was evident that the allocation of Fiddlers Field for 150 dwellings and subsequent development could give rise to some harmful environment effects caused by increase use of the adjacent wildlife site. To mitigate such potentially harmful effects and in order that housing proposals may be supported, planning applications should make provision of open space to meet the recreational needs of the new residents including for dog walking to ensure that adverse effects including harm to biodiversity on the adjacent wildlife site is avoided.
- On occupation of 90% of the development, the Parish Council will expect that such additional open space would be transferred to the Council for nominal consideration (£1.00), together with a commuted maintenance and management sum to cover these costs for not less than 20 years, including anticipated inflation, in order that the open space is not a burden on the local community over that period. Alternatively, these ownership, maintenance and management responsibilities could be transferred to a Fiddlers Field residents' association, if established by that time, at the discretion of the Parish Council. These arrangements would be included as planning obligations in the s106 Agreement.

FUTURE DOMESTIC HOUSING

Objective

To ensure that any future domestic housing built in Eight Ash Green reflects the existing, distinct open character area of the village, is of high quality and meets the appropriate needs of the community both now and in the future

Context

Whilst the immediate focus for future house building in the village is on the proposed development of 150 dwellings on Fiddlers Field, it is recognised that in the future, other developments may well occur whether they are in respect of a single house, the construction of more than one property and/or rural exception sites.

Intent

The intent behind the Policy set out below is to ensure where applicable, that any future housing is both appropriate to and in scale with the existing settlement.

In terms of the first two bullet points below in Policy DH1 (density, design and mix etc), the bullet points 3 to 5 set out above in Policy FF3 under “Rationale” are particularly relevant here as they clearly both reflect the views of the villagers as well as referring to the existing nature and make-up of the current housing in the village.

In terms of the third and fourth bullet points below in Policy DH1 (wiring, energy storage and broadband connections), all 5 of the bullet points set out above in Policy FF8 under “Rationale” are also relevant here.

Domestic Housing Policy (DH1): Residential development proposals other than at Fiddlers Field, should:

- Be of a density, design, and layout that respects and responds to the local character of the village and the location/site’s context and not extend more than two storeys above ground level*
- Provide a mix of dwelling size, type and tenure that reflects the housing*

needs of the Parish as indicated in the Technical Report 2017¹⁷

- *Provide appropriate wiring within each property for charging for electric cars/vehicles and demonstrate that the design and layout of the dwelling(s) on the site has the potential for the effective installation of sustainable battery pods to store energy from renewable resources*
- *Provide suitable connections for the installation of high quality telecommunications infrastructure including ducting for the provision of superfast broadband*

¹⁷ Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire, Technical Report, May 2017

<http://eightashgreen.net/Reg16Docs/EAG%20NP%20Questionnaire%20-%20Technical%20Report.pdf>

ENVIRONMENT

Reference has already been made to the rural nature of the village, (see Sections 3, 4 and 5 above), which is highly valued by the residents. “It is one of the reasons why I came to live in Eight Ash Green” is a common refrain.

There is a sense of spaciousness and calm to be found in the village. The Heath, open fields, network of footpaths, hedgerows, trees and woods, the biodiversity, play and sports facilities, and clean fresh air all contribute to an environment conducive towards a healthy, vibrant community across the whole age range from children, young families to senior citizens.

The green infrastructure also contributes to and helps sustain an abundance of wildlife utilising the numerous green corridors that includes a myriad of birds (sparrows, blackbirds, jays, pigeons, robins, pheasants, owls to name but a few) but also “land based” animals such as squirrels, deer, foxes, badgers for example as well as aquatic wildlife in the ponds located across the village such as ducks, moorhens, dragonflies, the Essex Skipper butterfly, Foesel’s Bush cricket and the Meadow grasshopper.

And finally, Seven Star Green, which is a registered Village Green of medieval legacy, contains some 125 species of wildflower grasses that have been uncultivated for hundreds of years with plants such as the Meadow Foxtail and Soft Rush to be found there.



Seven Star Green

Collectively, these provide the opportunity for a safe habitat for the animal kingdom as well as a tranquil setting and backdrop for the human population to enjoy nature at its best, helping to improve the physical/mental well-being and generally adding to the quality of life.

COALESCENCE

Objective

To maintain the existing gap between Eight Ash Green and Stanway/Colchester and other potential settlements such as the proposed West Tey Garden Community/New Town

Policy

Environment Policy 1 (EP1): Development beyond the settlement boundary of Eight Ash Green as defined on the Village Settlement Boundary Map resulting in coalescence between Eight Ash Green and neighbouring and existing and proposed settlements in adopted plans will not be supported

Rationale

The separation of Eight Ash Green from existing nearby developments/localities is very important to the village which is one of the key issues for the village, as set out in the Vision Statement. The defined settlement boundary is clearly marked out on the Village Settlement Boundary Map.

Context

Eight Ash Green is geographically separated from other nearby settlements both large and small. It is the wish of the villagers to maintain that separation and therefore the distinct identity of living in Eight Ash Green. The Landscape Character Assessment referred to in Section 3 above adds weight where the village is described as being a “small linear settlement” with its “setting providing visual and physical separation from Colchester”.

Intent

The intent behind this Policy is to help maintain a clear separation of Eight Ash Green, both from current and potential future settlements. The Policy EP1 clearly supports the Objective above.

Supporting Evidence

Supporting Evidence for the Policies EP1–5 can be found in the “Neighbourhood Plan Objectives and Policies – Supporting Evidence” document available on the Neighbourhood Plan website.



Aerial view of Eight Ash Green showing the green spaces in and around the village

PROTECTION FOR THE GREEN OPEN SPACES IN THE VILLAGE

Objective

To protect and where possible, enhance green/open spaces and biodiversity in the whole of the village

Policy

Environment Policy 2 (EP 2): The areas of green space indicated on the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Area Policies Map are protected from development, including change of use.

Proposals for development will not be supported unless it is demonstrated that:

- the chosen site represents the only available location for the development proposal;*
- the proposal would not result in significant loss of amenity, contribution to biodiversity, recreation or landscape character within Eight Ash Green; and*
- Alternative appropriate provision is provided in a location well related to the functional requirements of the relocated use*

Rationale

- Protection, enhancement and where practical, the “connectivity” of the open aspects, both within and external to the settlement, and the rural nature and feel of the village are important to the villagers. Such a small village is fortunate to have two Registered Village Greens, Protected Lanes, as well as the 10.5 acre Iron Latch nature reserve consisting of a flower-rich meadow and four acres of woodland where nightingales nest. There are five designated wildlife sites in the village – Fordham Heath, Fiddlers Wood, Seven Star Green, Iron Latch and Daisy Green Grove.

Context

Eight Ash Green sits in a truly rural setting surrounded by green, wide open spaces, containing a habitat rich in biodiversity.

Intent

The intent behind this Policy is to provide protection of the open spaces within the neighbourhood area. Development proposals will only be supported where no other locations are available to meet the development need and where such development would not cause significant harm through loss of amenity, biodiversity, recreation or landscape character within Eight Ash Green. To be acceptable, development proposals, will also need to provide appropriate alternative provision to mitigate loss of open space as a consequence of the proposed development.

The intention is not to seek compensatory mitigation which might be considered as inappropriate and unlawful.

PROTECTION FOR HEDGEROWS, TREES AND WOODS

Objective

To protect the existing hedgerows in the whole of the village

Policy

Environment Policy 3 (EP 3): Development proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan Area resulting in the destruction and/or removal of existing hedgerows will only be supported if replaced, on the same site

Rationale

- Protection and enhancement of the open aspect, rural nature and feel of the village is important to and much valued by the villagers. In addition, hedgerows, trees and woods provide a vital habitat and wildlife corridors for a wide variety of species enhancing the biodiversity and ecology of a locality which also helps to reduce carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.
- The village contains a Priority Deciduous Woodland Habitat alongside the south east corner of Choats Wood, a Priority Woodland and Old Orchard Habitat site alongside Blind Lane. The protection of trees and woodland are a material consideration in determining planning applications. In addition, guidance provides for formal protection is available through designation by Tree Preservation Orders and within conservation areas.

Context

The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 make provision for the appropriate protection of important hedgerows in England and Wales. The Landscape Character Assessment referred to in Section 3 above makes reference to the “Character” of a locality by reference to a combination of factors to include its ecological component i.e. the existing hedgerows, trees and woods in the village.

Intent

The intent behind this Policy is to ensure that should any damage be caused to the existing hedgerows in the village as a result of any development, that mitigation measures are put in place to restore what was there before.

FOOTPATHS, CYCLE & BRIDLEWAYS

Objective

To protect the existing footpaths, cycleways and bridleways in the village

Policy

Environment Policy 4 (EP 4): Existing footpaths, cycleways and bridleways shown on the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Areas Policies Map provide a high level of amenity value and will be protected. New developments which integrate with the current green infrastructure network improving the connectivity between local wildlife sites and green spaces improving and extending the existing footpath and cycle path network, allowing greater access to housing and retail facilities, green spaces, public open spaces and the countryside will be supported

Rationale

- There are 15 numbered footpaths in the village coupled with other non-numbered paths that provide a good network of walking opportunities coupled with two bridleways all of which are used regularly. They also provide opportunities for social interaction and informal meeting points.
- The Neighbourhood Areas Policies Map shows the existing public footpaths, bridleways and cycleways in the neighbourhood area.

Context

The Parish Paths Partnership working party undertakes a regular programme of maintenance throughout the year to keep the footpaths in good order and to ensure the finger posts and way markers can clearly be seen.

The Neighbourhood Plan Group met with the Essex Bridleway Association on 14th November 2016 to discuss the two, unconnected bridleways in Eight Ash Green. They confirmed that it is possible to divert a bridleway but this would involve a public consultation process.

The Neighbourhood Plan Group met with Sustrans, the national cycling organisation, on 24th January 2017 to discuss potential development of a network of new cycle routes in the village potential linking up with the existing National Cycle Network Route no 13 that runs through the centre of Eight Ash Green.¹⁸ Reference to this may be found in the Access and Leisure Project No 3.

Intent

The intent behind this Policy is to ensure that existing footpaths, cycleways and bridleways are protected. To enhance sustainability, the policy seeks to encourage a modal shift from car to walking and cycling associated with new development proposals by linking publicly accessible green space wherever possible to walking and cycling routes.

¹⁸ (2013) Ordnance Survey OS Explorer Map 184 - Colchester

PREVENTION OF FLOODING

Objective

To take steps to prevent flooding in the village

Policy

Environment Policy 5 (EP 5): Development will be supported where it is shown that drainage strategies for major development within the Plan area accord with the Essex SuDs Guide and will not negatively impact upon the existing network of drainage ditches within the Neighbourhood Area. The protection, extension and enhancement of these facilities are encouraged. Where it is necessary to enable development, any changes to a watercourse may require consent from Essex County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for an ordinary watercourse, or the Environment Agency for main rivers. Developers should contact the LLFA or Environment Agency for further advice.

Rationale

- Flooding as a result of new domestic or business developments would not be welcomed in the village.

Context

Apart from a narrow strip of land on the northern edge of the Parish boundary along the River Colne (the Neighbourhood Area), the risk of flooding is low with the village mainly positioned on the high ground having a surface geology consisting mostly of thin layers of sand and gravel. Up to date information/maps can be obtained from the Environment Agency and/or Colchester Borough Council.

However, should the existing ditches become blocked, coupled with heavy downpours of rain, then there is a risk of localised flooding. There are eight ponds in the village that might be able to absorb flood waters should they occur although not all are located near domestic housing.

Intent

The intent behind this Policy is to ensure that any development will not result in any part of the village being flooded. Developers for major development within the Plan area, such as Fiddlers Field, should refer to the Essex SuDs Guide (or future versions) and the recommendation is that they should engage in pre-applications discussions with the LLFA to ensure that any recommendations can be incorporated into site design as early into the planning process as possible.

HERITAGE

Objective

To protect the ancient heritage of our village

Context

Although the Civil Parish of Eight Ash Green as a separate, identifiable community is only some 70 years old, the village settlement pre-dates that, containing some ancient heritage, both man-made and natural.

Intent

Although listed buildings have some protection under primary legislation in the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act and the NPPF we see the provision of such a Policy in the Neighbourhood Plan as sending out a clear signal of the importance attached to the preservation and long term survival of our ancient heritage in its present form. Aside from Listed Buildings, there are also a number of other Heritage Assets within the village which require protection. These include, for example the 36 acre Fordham Heath, the Protected Lanes and the five designated wildlife sites in the village. A list of the 13 Grade 2 listed buildings; a map showing where they are located and a table listing the Assets are set out below.

Policy

Heritage Policy 1 (Her 1):

Any Listed Building or Heritage Asset and their setting within the Neighbourhood Plan Area should be maintained or where possible enhanced to protect from any future development.

Rationale

- The 13 Grade 2 Listed Buildings in Eight Ash Green, the oldest of which dates back to circa 1500, represent a priceless ancient heritage which needs to be preserved and protected.

- Although the village of Eight Ash Green is not an ancient village as a separate entity, nevertheless elements that make up the modern settlement have some very long standing characteristics such as the 13 listed buildings and the Registered Village Greens for example and these help to shape the Landscape Character of our village where “Character is influenced by particular combinations of visual historical and settlement components...”.

A table setting out details of our 13 Listed Buildings

Listed Buildings in EAG

No	Name	Grade	Location	Age	Date Listed	English Heritage Building ID
1	Abbots Hall	2	Abbots Lane	Circa 1500	23/6/1952	417617
2	Bakery Cottage	2	A1124, EAG	17 th C	27/1/1982	417652
3	Brick Stables House	2	Halstead Road	16 th C	27/1/1982	417692
4	Chippetts Farmhouse	2	Chippetts Lane	Late 16 th C	27/1/1982	417644
5	Coach House	2	Turkey Cock Lane	18 th C	27/1/1982	417698
6	Fiddlers Farmhouse	2	Fiddlers Hill	Circa 1900	27/1/1982	417649
7	Green Acres	2	Foxes Lane	16 th C	27/1/1982	417650
8	Kemps Farmhouse	2	Turkey Cock Lane	17 th C	27/1/1982	417696
9	Lampitts Farmhouse	2	Turkey Cock Lane	Circa 1560 & 17 th C	27/1/1982	417697
10	Little Porters	2	Porters Lane	17 th C	27/1/1982	417693
11	Malting House	2	Turkey Cock Lane	18 th C	27/1/1982	417694
12	Mantills Farmhouse	2	Foxes Lane	17 th C	27/1/1982	417651
13	Moat Farmhouse	2	Turkey Cock Lane	Circa 1690	27/1/1982	417695

Further details can be found at

<http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/england/essex/eight+ash+green>

A map showing the locations of our 13 Listed Buildings



Heritage Assets in Eight Ash Green

Serial	Grouping	Heritage item	Date	Protected status	Location Name and Grid ref
1	The National Heritage List for England	Thirteen Grade 2 listed buildings	Various	Yes	See table and map above
2	NMR Excavation Index	Excavation	1996	No	Choats Wood TL 943258
3	Church Heritage Records	All Saints Church (Church code 608942)	Not stated	No	Beside A1124 TL 941257
4	Colchester Heritage Register (CHR)	Cropmarks	Undated	No	North side of Bullbanks Farm TL 930264
5	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	East of Moat Farm TL 937249
6	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	South East of Bronze House Farm TL 938253
7	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	Newlands Farm TL 947258
8	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	West of Heathside Farm TL 939261
9	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	West of Fordham Heath TL 940266
10	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	South of White House Farm TL 945262
11	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	South of Pooles Farm TL 945270
12	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	North East of Chitts Hill TL 953258
13	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	West of Great Porters Farm TL 932271
14	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	South East of Thurgoods Farm TL 930252 & 928253
15	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	White House Farm TL 949263
16	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	White House Farm TL 947265
17	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	Porters Lane TL 937267

18	CHR	Milestone Inscription reads "IV to Colchester IX to Halstead"	Late c18 – early c19	No	Milestone Farm TL 937259
19	CHR	Pillbox AA type	WW2	No	Porters Farm TL 940271
20	CHR	Pillbox AA type	WW2	No	Porters Farm TL 934272
21	CHR	Pillbox	WW2	No	Porters Farm TL 946273
22	CHR	Pillbox	WW2	No	Porters Farm TL 939273
23	CHR	Pillbox	WW2	No	Porters Farm TL 934274
24	CHR	Pillbox	WW2	No	Porters Farm TL 932273
25	CHR	Pillbox AA type	WW2	No	Argents Lane TL 950266
26	CHR	Pillbox	WW2	No	North West corner of Fiddlers Wood TL 928269
27	CHR	Ammunition shelter	WW2	No	Fiddlers Wood TL 930269
28	CHR	Fordham Heath Registered Village Green VG 187	1391	No	Fordham Heath TL 944264 (The 36 acre Heath, first recorded in 1391 is shown on the 1777 Chapman & Andre Historic Map and the "Epoch and Historic Map 1876-1887")
29	CHR	"Eight Ash Green"	1777	No	East of Spring Lane TL 946257 Ancient green, no longer in existence. Shown on the Chapman & Andre Historic Map
30	CHR	Seven Star Green Registered Village Green VG 188	Medieval "1066 AD to 1539 AD"	No	NE to SW along Turkey Cock Lane TL 936256 VG 188 designation also includes Daisy Green
31	CHR	Axes Neolithic polished axe and other flint axes	Neolithic	No	South of White House Farm TL 949262 Found c 1968 Now in Colchester museum
32	PROW	Footpaths	Undated	No	Details on OS Explorer Map 184 Colchester TL 92 -96 Eastings TL 24 – 28 Northings
33		Bridleways	Undated	Yes	
34	Protected Lanes	Daisy Green Highway	1970's	Yes	TL 9225

35	Wildlife sites	Fiddlers Wood HC1 – Ancient Woodland Site	Undated	Yes	Co43 TL 929267
36	Wildlife sites	Daisy Green Grove HC1 – Ancient Woodland Site	Undated	Yes	Co47 TL 932258
37	Wildlife sites	Seven Star Green HC9 – Lowland Meadows HC13 – Heathland and Acid Grassland		Yes	Co55 TL 939258
38	Wildlife sites	Fordham Heath HC2 – Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland on non ancient sites HC9 – Lowland Meadows HC13 – Heathland and Acid Grassland SC1 – Vascular Plants		Yes	Co60 TL 945264
39	Wildlife sites	Iron Latch Lane HC2 – Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland on non ancient sites HC3 – Other Priority Habitat Woodland Types on non ancient sites HC9 – Lowland Meadows HC11 – Other Neutral Grasslands	Undated	Yes	Co68 TL 956260
40	Ponds	Fordham Heath	Undated	No	TL 944264
41	Ponds	Lower Heath	Undated	No	TL 945268
42	Ponds	Seven Star Green	Undated	No	TL 939258
43	Ponds	Daisy Green	Undated	No	TL 933258

NATURAL RESOURCES – RENEWABLE ENERGY

Objective

To encourage and support the effective and efficient use of the Earth's natural resources and promote energy efficiency in Eight Ash Green

Context

At a time when there are continual reminders and/or warnings of the effects of climate change and the need to harness the earth's natural resources, it seems only right that there should be a level of support and encouragement where possible at the local level.

Intent

The intent behind these Policies is not only to make it clear where the Neighbourhood Plan supports appropriate provision regarding domestic properties but in respect of possible commercial enterprises, where the geographical boundaries or limitations should apply.

Policy

Renewable Energy 1 - (Homes) (RE 1): Proposals for small-scale renewable energy generation associated within single residential properties will be supported provided it can be shown that they are located and designed in such a manner so as to minimise any increase in ambient noise levels and avoid any unacceptable impacts upon visual amenity

Rationale

- In terms of domestic properties, it is vital to ensure the maximum use is made of the Earth's natural resources as well as harnessing both existing and potential future renewable energy sources, thus helping to reduce reliance on fossil fuels. Existing domestic properties can already install solar panels without planning permission through their permitted development rights.

Policy

Renewable Energy 2 - (Solar Farms) (RE 2): Proposals for commercial solar farms will be supported where they are directed towards low grade agricultural land or brownfield sites and are designed in such a way so as to minimise increases in ambient noise levels and deliver adequate natural screening to avoid impacts upon visual amenity

Rationale

- Currently, there is little appetite in the village for commercial solar panel farms as they would detract from the rural feel and look of the village. However, should such developments be proposed, then they should be located on low grade agricultural land and/or brownfield sites. Appropriate screening should be considered should, for example, any solar farm be located adjacent to any domestic housing.

Supporting Evidence

Supporting Evidence for the Policies RE1–2 can be found in the “Neighbourhood Plan Objectives and Policies – Supporting Evidence” document available on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

LOCAL BUSINESSES

Objective

To support and where appropriate, expand the local businesses to boost the local economy and employment

Context

A Neighbourhood Plan addresses both the development and use of land for domestic housing and also for business use. In keeping with a small, rural village, Eight Ash Green only has a limited amount of land designated or approved for business use and therefore employment opportunities. Currently, there are two main parcels of land for business use in the village, the six acre Moat Farm complex (currently with some twelve small businesses) and Fiddlers Farm (currently with some three small businesses). See map below. There are also a number of other enterprises primarily at the Holiday Inn hotel, a cluster of shops and a garage at Wood Corner, as well as farm shop and garden centre/cafe in Turkey Cock Lane.

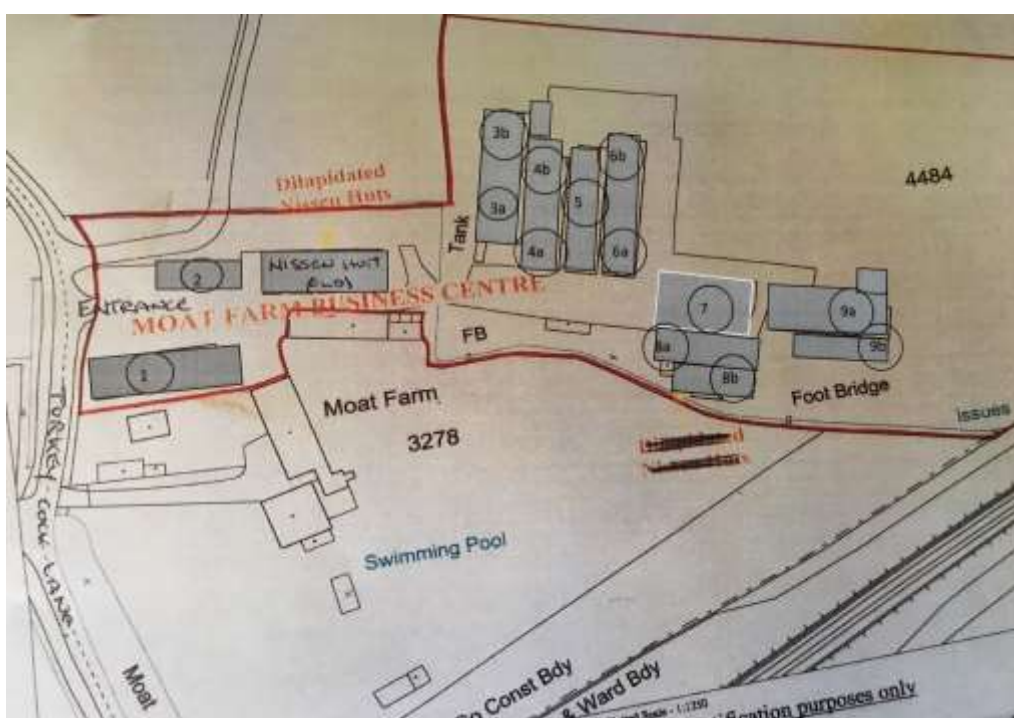
The two Business Areas



Moat Farm

It has emerged from discussions with the land owner at Moat Farm that he is looking to improve and expand the site so as to encourage more small firms to come to the village and thereby helping to create the opportunity for more local employment. The Neighbourhood Plan Group and the Parish Council are keen to support such an approach and therefore intend that the land comprising the Moat Farm complex should become a “Designated Business Area” whereby, in future, if small businesses wish to set up in Eight Ash Green, they will be directed towards that site.

Layout of the Moat Farm business area



Moat Farm has been chosen because it is a good, open site capable of expansion. In addition, the owner is working hard to improve both the layout and the infrastructure and it has good access.

Moat Farm is capable of absorbing some additional small businesses. It is located on the southern boundary of our Neighbourhood Area/Parish Boundary away from what are the more densely populated areas of the village. The site, which has good access for medium size vehicles, (vehicles over four metres in height cannot obtain access from London Road, Stanway) is nestled

in the countryside surrounded by trees and fields and the existing buildings do not detract from the wider ambience of the area. Whilst the Parish Council wants to help encourage more local employment, large commercial enterprises requiring premises of three or more storeys e.g. warehouses, storage, distribution centres or large industrial premises would not be appropriate on this land. The aim is to encourage/bring small, new single or two storey businesses on to the Moat Farm site.

The Neighbourhood Plan Group met with the owner of the Moat Farm business area on 7th August 2017 who confirmed he agrees with the rationale set out above – as owner of the site, he does not wish to see large businesses/commercial concerns on his land.

Intent

The intent behind *Policy BP1* below, which clearly supports the Objective above, is to clarify the expectations for the future businesses in the village, to help boost the local economy by expanding the opportunities for local employment where it is appropriate to do so.

Policy

Businesses Policy 1 (BP 1): Moat Farm (shown on the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Area Policies Map) is designated as a business area.

Proposals should demonstrate how likely significant adverse environmental effects of development will be mitigated during construction, subsequent use and estate management, as appropriate. Proposals encouraging more sustainable means of transport will be supported.

Rationale

- In designating the existing employment at Moat Farm as a Business Area in the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan, the Parish Council supports the retention and proposals for expansion of employment activity on the site in buildings constructed on up to two storeys, within use classes¹⁹

¹⁹ The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, Statutory Instruments 1987 No 764
See also the amendments to the original order at
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/changes/affected/uksi/1987/764>

B1, B2 and B8 where it is demonstrated that the rural character of the area will not be significantly harmed.

- The Moat Farm site is the preferred location for small businesses in the neighbourhood area to boost the local economy, encourage local employment and the provision of additional services.
- To mitigate possible adverse environmental impact associated with additional employment development at Moat Farm, as identifies in the Strategic Environmental Assessment, policy precautions were considered necessary to mitigate possible environmental harm.
- To meet this concern and acknowledging that further employment development at Moat Farm will deliver positive economic benefits, development proposals should demonstrate through Design and Access Statements and where appropriate, construction management statements, the measures incorporated to mitigate likely adverse effects.
- Development at Moat Farm, for which the objective is to boost local employment opportunities should encourage cycling as a means of accessing the site as a sustainable choice through design and provision of appropriate facilities.
- Promotion of this site for additional employment development will increase the opportunity for improvements to be realised for on-site infrastructure and provision of acceptable waste is subject to agreement with the County Council as waste authority.
- It is understood that the site has capacity for development of approximately 3,000m² provided in 5 to 6 units of accommodation.



Moat House Farm Business Area

COMMUNITY AMENITIES

Objective

To provide, support, maintain and where appropriate, introduce a range of amenities in the village

Context

Eight Ash Green has a range of good quality community amenities that includes a public house, allotments, two dental surgeries and a hotel with a leisure centre. In addition, there is a designated play area on the Heath, the Heath itself and footpaths for walkers, two bridleways, two sports pitches and National Cycle Route No 13 which runs from NW to SE across the Parish.



Village Pub (The Cricketers)



Eight Ash Green Football Club



Children's Play Area on Fordham Heath



Cricket Pitch and Pavilion on Fordham Heath

Intent

To ensure there is a range of modern community facilities in the village which people can participate in either collectively or individually that will help to reinforce a sense of community.

Policy

Community Site (CS 1): Land on the site of the Church of England Church (as shown on the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Area Policies Map) is designated as the site for a new Community Hub/Hall and shall be safeguarded for that purpose. Development proposals which promote alternative uses on the site will not be supported.

Layout of the Church site



Rationale

- The current village hall located in Spring Lane to the East of the village, which was formerly an army hut located in Matching Green, having moved to Eight Ash Green in 1948, is no longer fit for purpose. It is small, it will be at least 70 years old in 2018 and the facilities such as the toilets are in need of updating, hooks are available rather than a proper cloakroom and storage is poor. In addition, the car park only has some ten spaces which means that visitors either have to park on the busy

Spring Lane, thus blocking the views of drivers looking either north or south (the hall is located on a sloping bend in the road) or park in nearby streets.

- The owner of the site of the Church is the Diocese of Chelmsford and the local vicar is supportive of the proposed Policy.
- The proposed site is located in the centre of the village, has good access, there is plenty of land for parking and room to build a new, bigger hub/community hall which will be able to host larger audiences and provide more modern facilities such as film showings, dance hall, indoor badminton court, gymnasium equipment etc.
- The site of the existing village hall, which is on a different locality and at one end of the village, is owned by the Parish Council. Upon the erection of a new hall/hub, it is likely the old village hall will be dismantled and the site used for other purposes that might include a new domestic dwelling.

Supporting evidence

Supporting Evidence for the Policies CA1 and CS1 can be found in the “Neighbourhood Plan Objectives and Policies – Supporting Evidence” document available on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

Habitat Regulations Assessment

- 10.1 Habitat Regulations Assessments have been completed for Colchester Borough Council's Section 1 Local Plan and Section 2 Local Plan. Both of these assessments identified that the in-combination effects of the Section 1 and Section 2 Local Plans (including the cumulative effects of the Section 2 allocations), together with neighbouring local planning authorities Local Plans and neighbourhood plans are likely to adversely affect the integrity of European designated nature conservation sitesⁱ²⁰ ('European Sites').
- 10.2 In view of that Colchester Borough Council is working with ten other Greater Essex local planning authorities, and Natural England, on a Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) for the Essex coast. RAMS is a strategic solution to protect the Essex coast from the recreational pressures of a growing population. A RAMS is usually driven by challenges and opportunities arising from planning issues. RAMS generally applies more broadly than at a single designated European site, provides strategic scale mitigation and enables the development of a generic approach to evidence collection and use.
- 10.3 Financial contributions will be sought for all residential development, which falls within the zones of influence, towards a package of measures to avoid and mitigate likely significant adverse effects in accordance with policy SP2b of the Shared Strategic Section 1 Plan and policy ENV1 (Environment) of the Section 2 Colchester Borough Local Plan. This includes development allocated in Neighbourhood Plans within Colchester Borough. Details of the zones of influence and the necessary measures will be included in the Essex Coast RAMS Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
- 10.4 In the interim period, before the Essex Coast RAMS is completed, proposals within the zones of influence for recreational disturbance to European sites will need to carry out a project level Habitat Regulations Assessment and implement bespoke mitigation measures to ensure that in-combination recreational disturbance effects are avoided and/or mitigated.

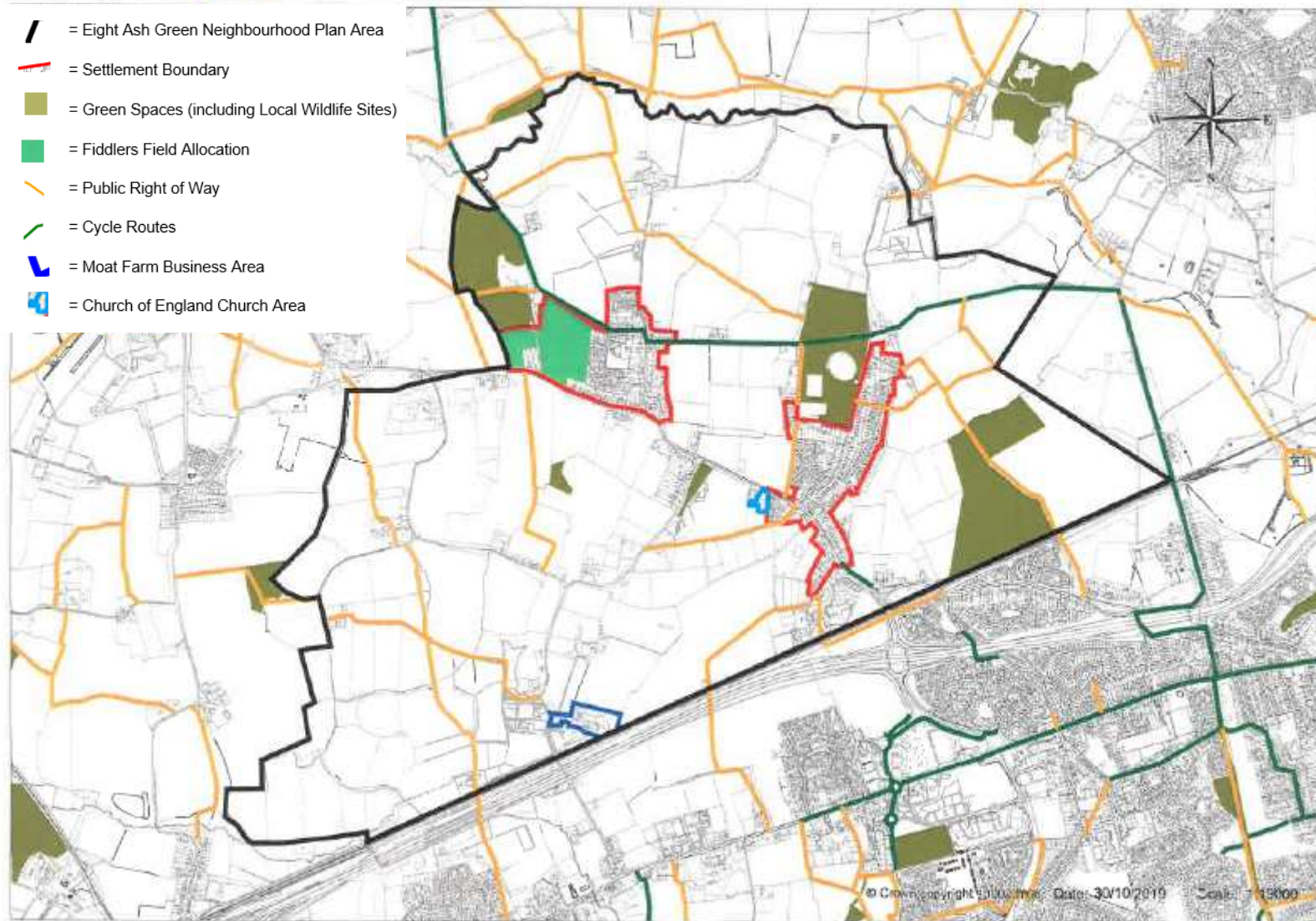
²⁰ Colne Estuary Special Protection Area and Ramsar, Blackwater Estuary Special Protection Area and Ramsar and Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation

Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Policy

RAMS 1 - All residential development within the zones of influence of European 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 European 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.

Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Area Policies Map



Supporting documents

11.1 In support of this Neighbourhood Plan, there are a number of documents available at www.eightashgreen.net :-

- A Project Plan
- A Basis Conditions Statement
- A Consultation Statement
- An Evidence base
- Village Settlement Boundary
- Site Selection process
- Assessment of sites put forward in Eight Ash Green
- The Neighbourhood Plan Objectives and Policies Supporting Evidence
- Regulation 14 – Process – Consultation - Outcomes
- The March 2017 questionnaire and Technical report setting out the results
- The Village Design Statement of 2013

Annex A: Members of the Neighbourhood Plan Group and acknowledgements

Annex B: The type/number and style/number of properties that may be built on Fiddlers Field

Annex C: Projects

Key milestones, next steps and monitoring

KEY MILESTONES

12.1 Full details are contained in the Project Plan available on the website but the key milestones have been:

- Agreement by the Parish Council to develop a Neighbourhood Plan in February 2015
- The formation of a Neighbourhood Plan Group in March 2015
- Informing the village of the proposal to develop a Neighbourhood Plan in April 2015
- Designation of the Neighbourhood Area by Colchester Borough Council in June 2015
- Setting up the Neighbourhood Plan website in June 2015
- Obtain the neighbourhood profile of the village from the Rural Community Council for Essex in July 2015
- Meeting with relevant stakeholders 2015 – 2018
- Distribution of questionnaire to villagers in March 2017
- Undertaking the Regulation 14 consultation – February to March 2018

MONITORING

13.1 It is anticipated the Parish Council will monitor this Plan on a regular basis taking into account any new national guidance and developments undertaken or introduced by Colchester Borough Council. This will take place annually as part of the preparations for the Annual Public meeting of the Parish Council.

Annex A

Members of the Neighbourhood Plan Group and acknowledgements

Members

- Leon Coombs (Chairman) [ex 8th February 2017]
- Alistair McGarry (Chairman) – from 29th March 2017
- John Allcock (Vice Chair)
- Steve Brown (Secretary)
- Adam Hildred (Member) – from 29th November 2016 to 21st June 2017
- Lewis Hopkins (Analyst) – from 29th June 2015
- Jenny Jones (Treasurer)
- Jason Nottage (Member) - from 27th May 2015 to 8th August 2018
- Dennis Willetts (Adviser)

Acknowledgements

- The villagers of Eight Ash Green
- Colchester Borough Council
 - Daniel Cameron
 - Bethany Jones
 - Beverley McClean
 - Marie Rutherford
 - Sandra Scott
- Rural Community Council for Essex
 - Michelle Gardner
 - Sarah Sapsford
 - Jan Stobart
- Ann Skippers (Ann Skippers Planning)
- Jeremy Edge (Examiner)

Annex B

Illustrative Housing Mix

1. Type and number of properties

	Range	Number of Properties
First Time Buyers & downsizers (1-2 Beds)	37-45%	61
Family Homes (2-4 Beds)	39-47%	65
Larger Family Homes (5+ beds)	14-18%	24
TOTAL		150

2. Style and number of properties

	Range	Number of Properties
Houses	65-75%	105
Bungalows	22-30%	39
Flats	3-5%	6
TOTAL		150

3. High degree of support (90%) for some 'adapted' properties for independent living

	Range	Number of Properties
Adapted Properties	8-12%	15

4. In addition, there is a requirement for 'affordable housing'

Proposed housing budget at Fiddlers Field of 150 new dwellings	Rate %	Number of Properties
Policy compliant affordable housing	30%	45
Target Affordable Housing Tenure		
<i>Affordable rent</i>	>=80%	>=36
<i>Shared ownership</i>	<= 20%	<= 9

Notes:

1. If a higher number of one type and/or style of property is chosen in respect of any of the three elements in either sections 1 and 2, then it needs to correspond with an equivalent lower amount in any of the other two elements so as to keep within the total of 150 properties.
2. The indicative figures in sections 3 and 4 are to be included within the overall total of 150 properties i.e. they are NOT in addition.
3. Section 4 to include the target Affordable Tenure agreed with the applicant at Fiddlers Field on 19th May 2019.

Annex C

Projects

14.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Group has identified a number of projects the village wishes to pursue/see adopted. The projects listed below are matters that are outside the scope of the statutory neighbourhood plan i.e. they fall outside the remit of the planning system. Taken in conjunction with the various Objectives and Policies that form part of the Neighbourhood Plan, they provide a package of measures the villagers wish to see implemented.

The natural environment

14.2 Protection and enhancement of the open aspect, rural nature and feel of the village is important. The Parish Council owns and maintains the Heath, the “Jewel in the Crown” of the village. Project 1 below garnered 100 per cent support at the village open meeting of 6th May 2017.

Environment Project 1: Support and encouragement is to be provided to farmers and other land-owners who wish to introduce new and/or maintain current natural habitats for wildlife

Environment Project 2: To retain and protect the five designated wildlife sites in the village, ensuring they are well maintained and kept in good condition

Economy – Business

14.3 Although the installation of charging points for electric vehicles is a widespread permitted development, Business Project 1 below sends a clear signal of support for such an expansion thus helping to reduce the carbon footprint in the village.

Business Project 1: To support the introduction of charging points for electric cars and commercial vehicles on both the Moat Farm and Fiddlers Farm business areas

14.4 Separate to the two business areas in the village (Moat and Fiddlers Farms), there are a number of small retail outlets that includes the cluster of shops and a garage at Wood Corner, as well as farm shop and garden centre/cafe in Turkey Cock Lane. Project 2 below garnered some 88 per cent support at the village open meeting of 6th May 2017.

Business Project 2: To support the various small retail businesses located in the village by encouraging local people to use these facilities where practicable, thus helping to contribute towards the sustainability of the village

Infrastructure

14.5 The village, which contains the very busy A1124, is only some 5 km from the very large town of Colchester. Nevertheless, Eight Ash Green is a rural village much valued by all who live here. In addition, there are some truly rural parts of the village and these include Foxes Lane (which is a Protected Lane) and Daisy Green for example. Seven Star Green is a registered Village Green of medieval legacy and Abbots Lane has the historical feature of its pond which provides a safe habitat for wildlife. The desire to maintain the rurality of these locations remains strong with no wish to “urbanise” any of these locations. The Project below garnered support in the 90s in percentage terms at the village open meeting of 6th May 2017.

Infrastructure Project: To continue to retain and protect the unique rural nature of the village and in particular Foxes Lane; Daisy Green; Seven Star Green; Turkey Cock Lane; and Abbots Lane by not introducing any form of “urban” infrastructure such as road widening, street lights, yellow lines or pavements

Road safety

14.6 Anti-social parking in Abbots Lane can prevent, or make difficult, access to Doucecroft School which is located at the far south eastern end of the narrow Lane. Design Guideline no 67 of the Village Design Statement of 2013 provides the basis of Project 1 below.

Road safety Project 1: To ensure that parking in Abbotts Lane does not obstruct access to the school by the emergency services, by way of the introduction of appropriate traffic orders

14.7 Due to the substantial number of HGV vehicles using the unclassified road between Fordham Heath and Fordham in the vicinity of the Holy Trinity School and Fiddlers Folly, traffic calming measures would help to ensure the possibility of an incident is reduced. Design Guideline no 68 of our Village Design Statement of 2013 provides the basis of Project 2 below.

Road safety Project 2: To ensure safe and appropriate access to the Holy Trinity School by the installation of traffic calming measures such as chicanes on both sides of the local road and its junction with Fiddlers Folly

Education

14.8 A good primary school education provides the foundation for pupils as they progress through the education system and any appropriate development on the school land/premises that supports this, is to be encouraged and supported. The Project below garnered some 98 per cent support at the village open meeting of 6th May 2017.

Education Project: To encourage and support the effective and optimum use of the land at the school with the aim of maintaining and where appropriate, enhancing the education provided to the pupils

Communications

14.9 High speed broadband is the lifeblood of business and is highly desirable for domestic properties, not only for leisure purposes but also to enable people to work effectively from home. The Project below garnered 100 per cent support at the specific Focus Group meeting of 25th February 2017 and in response to question 28 of the March 2017 questionnaire, some 80 per cent of householders said they would wish to change to superfast broadband. Action Plan no 9 of the 2011 Parish Plan concerned “Broadband in the Village” where the expectation was described as follows:-

- An improvement in Broadband speed for the whole village, by the best economical means possible”.

Communications Project: The provision of effective fibre superfast broadband to both the Designated Business Area in the village and the existing houses in Eight Ash Green is to be supported.

Effective use of land

14.10 There are various parcels of land in the village that include areas where people park their cars so as to use the appropriate facility as per below. They should be kept in good order, safe to use and navigate, especially in view of the number of different groups, ages and disabilities of people who regularly use them. These include the Village Hall booked by numerous groups or societies; the Cricketers Public House which is a really key asset, well supported by the villagers (and beyond); the C of E Church especially if this area is to become a “community hub” with the introduction of a new village hall in due course; and the car park along Heath Road to the north of the football pitch.

Land Project: To maintain and where appropriate, to improve both the land itself and the areas for parking at the existing Village Hall on Spring Lane, the Cricketers Public House; the C of E Church; and along Heath Road

Community safety

14.11 To help ensure the safety of both pedestrians and motorists, it is important all the street lights in the village are in good working order and effective use is made of the latest technology. The Project below garnered some 99 per cent support at the village open meeting of 6th May 2017.

Community Safety Project: To work with Essex County Council to ensure the existing street lights are kept in good order and, where necessary, are repaired promptly and to encourage ECC to replace the existing street lights with LED technology. A similar approach should be taken by the Parish Council in respect of the street lights that are the responsibility of the Parish Council

Access and leisure

14.12 If the activities set out below are to be enjoyed, particularly by the participants, then it is vital the land is kept in good condition especially in terms of the playing surface for cricket. As owners of both pitches, the Parish Council fully supports Project 1 below.

Access and Leisure Project 1: To ensure that both the football and cricket pitches are well maintained and are kept in good condition

14.13 To help counter irresponsible dog fouling, having safe and effective dog “poo” bins is essential.

14.14 An article in the village newsletter of November 2015, reminded dog owners of the need to act responsibly and use the dog “poo” bins. The article in the Essex County Standard of Friday 10th February 2017 highlighted how “dirty dog owners” were making residents’ lives a misery around the Holy Trinity School leaving their dogs’ mess on the ground.

Access and Leisure Project 2: To ensure the existing dog “poo” bins are well maintained and are kept in good condition

14.15 If cycling is to be encouraged and supported, it is vital to ensure the National Cycle Network Route 13 route is kept open and as safe as possible. Discussions with Sustrans, the national cycling organisation, emphasised the importance of this Route as a means of access to and from Colchester.

Access and Leisure Project 3: To work with Essex County Council and Colchester Borough Council to ensure that the route of the National Cycle Network Route 13 within the village is well maintained and is kept in good condition

14.16 Again, if cycling is to be encouraged and supported, a dedicated cycle path would be a key component, linking in with the village footpaths. Some 49 per cent of villagers who responded to question 22 of the March 2017

questionnaire said they would be encouraged to make use of a cycle network in the village should one be developed.

Access and Leisure Project 4: Working with Sustrans, to support and encourage the introduction of a dedicated cycle network in the village and where possible, linking this with the footpath network in the village

14.17 The provision of cycle stands located in four frequently used/visited areas covering the breadth of the village, may help encourage the villagers to cycle more often.

Access and Leisure Project 5: The placement of cycle stands at the Holy Trinity school; the car park on the northern edge of the Heath by the play area; the Cricketers PH; and at the southern end of Wood Lane by the post box is to be supported

14.18 So as to ensure both the enjoyment and safety of participants, it is vital that the footpaths and bridleways are kept in good condition. So as to encourage villagers to participate in/adopt a healthy lifestyle, it is important they have a clear and safe access to the countryside via Public Rights of Ways. Members of the village work under the auspices of the Parish Paths Partnership arrangements to clear and maintain the footpaths and bridleways on a regular basis. Design Guideline 18 of our Village Design Statement of 2013 underpins Project 6 below.

11.19 In addition, farmers and other landowners should be encouraged to report any problems in respect of the routes, way markers and finger posts to Essex County Council.

Access and Leisure Project 6: To ensure the footpaths and bridleways are well maintained and are kept in good condition and to encourage and support farmers/landowners to maintain, mark out and where appropriate, improve the Public Rights of Ways and Bridleways on their land

14.20 The annual village music festival is by now an annual tradition enjoyed by many hundreds of people (Eight Ash Green residents and beyond).

Access and Leisure Project 7: To support and encourage the continuation of the annual village music festival on Parish Council land

SUMMARY

The table below summarises the Projects with regard to non-planning issues; the proposed Action(s); the lead organisation; and the Priorities:

Serial	Project	Theme	Action	Lead and <i>partners</i>	Priority
1	Environment 1	Encouragement of natural habitats for wildlife	PC to meet with farmers and landowners	PC in conjunction with <i>farmers and landowners</i>	Long term
2	Environment 2	Retention and protection of the five designated wildlife sites	PC to monitor the status of the sites annually	PC	Long term
3	Business 1	Charging points for electric vehicles	In conjunction with the land owners, PC to survey businesses	PC with <i>land owners</i>	Long term
4	Business 2	Support for small businesses	Adverts – flyers printed and distributed by business owners Articles (i.e. not just adverts) in the village newsletters “Sponsorship” for NPG flyers	PC <i>working with businesses</i>	On-going

5	Infrastructure	Protection of rural areas	PC to monitor any potential developments very closely	PC	On-going
6	Road safety 1	Parking in Abbots Lane	PC to survey households in Abbots Lane to ascertain the extent of any problems (if any)	PC with <i>households and ECC</i>	Low
7	Road safety 2	Traffic calming near the school	PC to survey/ask parents and the Head of the Holy Trinity School about the extent of any problems	PC with <i>households and Head of school</i>	Medium
8	Education	Effective use of school land	To approach the PC about any desirable proposals and/or developments	School Head	On-going
9	Comms	Provision of superfast fibre broadband	PC to survey businesses about their current speeds and requirements	PC with <i>appropriate suppliers</i>	High
10	Use of land	Enhancement of parking areas	Landowners to monitor use of land and to record any adverse comments	Landowners <i>working with PC where appropriate</i>	On-going

11	Community safety	Improvement to street lights	PC to check on standard and type of street lights	PC with ECC	Long term
12	Access and Leisure 1	Maintenance of the football and cricket pitches		PC with <i>sports clubs</i>	On-going
13	Access and Leisure 2	Maintenance of the dog poo bins	PC to monitor bins on a regular basis	PC	On-going
14	Access and Leisure 3	Maintenance of National Cycle Network Route 13	PC to monitor on a regular basis	PC with ECC and CBC	On-going
15	Access and Leisure 4	To consider establishing a dedicated cycle network in the village	PC to consider a feasibility study in conjunction with Sustrans	PC with <i>Sustrans</i>	Medium
16	Access and Leisure 5	New cycle stands	PC to survey residents to establish a need	PC	High
17	Access and Leisure 6	Maintenance of footpaths and bridleways	PC to establish a working group of interested parties	PC in conjunction with <i>farmers and landowners</i>	On-going
18	Access and Leisure 7	Annual music festival	PC to support the Festival Committee	Festival Committee with PC	On-going