

Local Development Framework Committee

**Grand Jury Room, Town Hall
29 September 2008 at 6:00pm**

**The Local Development Framework Committee
deals with**
the Council's responsibilities relating to the Local
Development Framework.

Information for Members of the Public

Access to information and meetings

You have the right to attend all meetings of the Council, its Committees and Cabinet. You also have the right to see the agenda, which is usually published 5 working days before the meeting, and minutes once they are published. Dates of the meetings are available at www.colchester.gov.uk or from Democratic Services.

Have Your Say!

The Council values contributions from members of the public. Under the Council's Have Your Say! policy you can ask questions or express a view to meetings, with the exception of Standards Committee meetings. If you wish to speak at a meeting or wish to find out more, please pick up the leaflet called "Have Your Say" at Council offices and at www.colchester.gov.uk.

Private Sessions

Occasionally meetings will need to discuss issues in private. This can only happen on a limited range of issues, which are set by law. When a committee does so, you will be asked to leave the meeting.

Mobile phones, pagers, cameras, audio recorders

Please ensure that all mobile phones and pagers are turned off before the meeting begins and note that photography or audio recording is not permitted.

Access

There is wheelchair access to the Town Hall from West Stockwell Street. There is an induction loop in all the meeting rooms. If you need help with reading or understanding this document please take it to Angel Court Council offices, High Street, Colchester or telephone (01206) 282222 or textphone 18001 followed by the full number that you wish to call, and we will try to provide a reading service, translation or other formats you may need.

Facilities

Toilets are located on the second floor of the Town Hall, access via the lift. A vending machine selling hot and cold drinks is located on the ground floor.

Evacuation Procedures

Evacuate the building using the nearest available exit. Make your way to the assembly area in the car park in St Runwald Street behind the Town Hall. Do not re-enter the building until the Town Hall staff advise you that it is safe to do so.

Colchester Borough Council, Angel Court, High Street, Colchester
telephone (01206) 282222 or
textphone 18001 followed by the full number that you wish to call
e-mail: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk
www.colchester.gov.uk

**COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK COMMITTEE
29 September 2008 at 6:00pm**

Members

Chairman : Councillor Cope.
Deputy Chairman : Councillor Spyvee.
Councillors Jowers, Davidson, Garnett, Goss, Naish and Sutton.

Substitute Members : All members of the Council who are not members of the Planning Committee.

Agenda - Part A

(open to the public including the media)

Pages

1. Welcome and Announcements

(a) The Chairman to welcome members of the public and Councillors and to remind all speakers of the requirement for microphones to be used at all times.

(b) At the Chairman's discretion, to announce information on:

- action in the event of an emergency;
- mobile phones switched to off or to silent;
- location of toilets;
- introduction of members of the meeting.

2. Substitutions

Members may arrange for a substitute councillor to attend a meeting on their behalf, subject to prior notice being given. The attendance of substitute councillors must be recorded.

3. Urgent Items

To announce any items not on the agenda which the Chairman has agreed to consider because they are urgent and to give reasons for the urgency.

4. Declarations of Interest

The Chairman to invite Councillors to declare individually any personal interests they may have in the items on the agenda.

If the personal interest arises because of a Councillor's membership of

or position of control or management on:

- any body to which the Councillor has been appointed or nominated by the Council; or
- another public body

then the interest need only be declared if the Councillor intends to speak on that item.

If a Councillor declares a personal interest they must also consider whether they have a prejudicial interest. If they have a prejudicial interest they must leave the room for that item.

If a Councillor wishes to make representations on an item on which they have a prejudicial interest they may do so if members of the public are allowed to make representations. In such circumstances a Councillor must leave the room immediately once they have finished speaking.

An interest is considered to be prejudicial if a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard it as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Councillor's judgement of the public interest.

Councillors should consult paragraph 7 of the Meetings General Procedure Rules for further guidance.

5. Have Your Say!

(a) The Chairman to invite members of the public to indicate if they wish to speak or present a petition at this meeting – either on an item on the agenda or on a general matter not on this agenda. You should indicate your wish to speak at this point if your name has not been noted by Council staff.

(b) The Chairman to invite contributions from members of the public who wish to Have Your Say! on a general matter not on this agenda.

6. Minutes

1 - 4

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 11 August 2008

7. Langham Village Design Statement - Proposed Planning Guidance Note

5 - 35

See report by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration

8. Supply of Flats in Colchester

36 - 39

See report by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration

9. Exclusion of the Public

In accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public, including the press, from the meeting so that any items containing exempt information (for example confidential personal, financial or legal advice), in Part B of this agenda (printed on yellow paper) can be decided. (Exempt information is defined in Section 100I and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK COMMITTEE

11 AUGUST 2008

Present:- Councillor Cope (Chairman)
Councillors Davidson, Goss, Jowers and Naish.

Substitute Members:- Councillor Barton for Councillor Spyvee
Councillor Lissimore for Councillor Garnett

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 17 March and 14 May 2008 were confirmed as a correct record, subject to the interests declared for minute no. 21 of the meeting held on 17 March 2008 being amended to read as follows:-

"Councillors Jowers (in respect of his membership of Essex County Council), Turrell (in respect of her memberships of Essex County Council and Myland Parish Council) and J. Young (in respect of her membership of Essex County Council) each declared their individual personal interests in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(3)."

Councillor Lewis attended and, with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Committee in respect of the third paragraph of minute no. 21 of the meeting held on 17 March 2008. Subsequent to that meeting she had learned that the parcel of land in Landseer Road which she had believed was in Christ Church Ward had in fact been correctly identified in the report as being in Lexden Ward.

Councillor Jowers (in respect of his role as an Essex County Council Cabinet member for Planning, and his membership of the Regional Planning Panel) declared his personal interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(3).

4. Local Development Framework - Update

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration providing an update on progress of the Council's Local Development Framework which provides the planning framework for the future development of Colchester.

Mrs Louisa White addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(3). She had ongoing concerns about the congestion in Mile End which she believed was generated from the increase in housing in the area. She also had ongoing concerns about the lack of facilities and infrastructure such as the bus lane on the Northern Approach Road (NAR) and the park and ride facility. Whilst she was not against the Haven Gateway in the long term she was concerned about any impact on Mile End as a result of any additional growth required. Another concern was in respect of the locational annotations on the maps included in the Core Strategy document. It was her view that Mile End was in the centre of an area which had received a great deal of new housing, but some of the maps

included in the Core Strategy document made no mention of Mile End whilst other areas such as Braiswick, Highwoods and Colchester Hospital, not subjected to so much development had been mentioned. Colchester Community Stadium was indicated as being near the A12 or near Cuckoo Farm and again she considered that it was appropriate to mention its proximity to Mile End.

Karen Syrett, Spatial Policy Manager, and Paul Wilkinson, Transportation Policy Manager, attended to assist the Committee in its deliberations. In response to Mrs White, it was explained that in terms of infrastructure detailed work had been undertaken and submitted as part of the Core Strategy. It was hoped that further detailed work would be undertaken to supplement the work already done in time for the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy next year. It was regretted that Mrs White felt that Mile End was not mentioned sufficiently. In respect of the progress of the Core Strategy document, the Council was waiting to see whether the Inspector would make any comments or recommended any changes to the document.

It was explained that the Local Development Framework (LDF) was a different document from its predecessor, the Local Plan, which had been 'saved' until it has been replaced by documents in the LDF. The LDF comprised a number of documents which were at varying stages in the consultation process. Members of the Committee expressed concerns about the amount of consultation undertaken and the Government had recognised that the amount of consultation being undertaken was disproportionate in some instances; consequently it was seeking to streamline the process. However in respect of controversial issues there would remain the need for an appropriate level of consultation to be undertaken.

The Core Strategy was a borough wide strategic document which could be compared to the County Structure Plan. Preferred Options for the Site Allocations document and the Development Policies document would be considered by the Committee later this year and then there would follow a further round of consultation. The Site Allocations document would identify sites for housing, employment land, etc. The Development Policies document would include all the detailed policies against which applications for planning permission would be decided. The North Station Development Brief was a new piece of work on an area around North Station and extending to the Cowdray Centre. The timetable for the North Station Development Brief had slipped because it had been considered important to ensure it was a comprehensive piece of work by including elements such as the public realm, links into the town centre and to reflect Colchester's recent Cycling Town status.

There was a degree of frustration from some members of the Committee in respect of earlier expectations of the Northern Approach Road (NAR) and elements such as the A12 junction, the bus lane, the park and ride and the prevention of access roads onto the NAR, all of which had been in the Local Plan but appeared not to have been achieved. The expectation now was that the A12 junction would be done first and then the bus lane put in place. It was explained that the Local Plan documents would carry through to 2011 so that everything that had not been completed would be taken forward as part of the Core Strategy and Site Allocations document; they were likely to be delivered but over a longer time period.

In respect of the A12 junction, Colchester had been shortlisted for a partial funding from the Community Infrastructure Fund for £10.2 million of the proposed new junction which would fund the bridge, two roundabouts and the four slip roads. The total cost would be approximately £24 million and the balance of nearly £14 million, to provide for the rest of the link roads southwards to connect with the existing NAR and for the implementation of the

busway, would need to be funded by developers as part of Section 106 agreements attached to developments in that part of the borough.

Essex has been allocated 32% of the total Community Infrastructure Fund available across the country and this substantial proportion reflects the level of growth which the county has accepted, and recognises the amount of infrastructure required to support that additional housing. The next step would be to submit a business case based on sources of additional funding being identified in order for the award to be taken up. The business case would be developed in conjunction with Essex County Council and other major partners. There is a limited period of 2 years, to 2011, in which to identify sources of the additional funding. Members of the Committee acknowledged the work undertaken by officers at Colchester Borough Council and Essex County Council who put forward the schemes which would benefit from the funding.

RESOLVED that the progress of the Council's Local Development Framework be noted.

Councillor Jowers (in respect of his role as an Essex County Council Cabinet member for Planning, and his membership of the Regional Planning Panel) declared his personal interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(3).

5. Publication of the Final East of England Plan

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration on the implications of the publication of the final East of England Plan, otherwise known as the Regional Spatial Strategy, which sets out the regional planning policies for the East of England region. Appended to the report was a briefing note highlighting any sections of particular relevance to Colchester.

Mrs Louisa White addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(3) in respect of the lack of facilities in Mile End, particularly the lack of a school, and too much traffic. Conditions placed upon planning permissions for elements of Colchester General Hospital and Colchester Community Stadium had not been implemented and there has been a failure to deliver a single facility for Mile End.

Karen Syrett, Spatial Policy Manager, and James Firth, Planning Policy Officer, attended to assist the Committee in its deliberations.

It was explained that the Borough Council had been provided with only two paper copies of the Plan, one of which was in the Members Room. In response to a request for a top level diagram of the policies to illustrate how they were linked, it was explained that this was not available within this document. There were separate links to the various sections but there was no easy link to the list of policies.

In respect of housing for the elderly, the young and special needs it was explained that those criteria would be judged on a housing allocations policy using a housing needs assessment which might feed in through the housing need target. There was a reference to special needs in area strategy documents.

Also queried was the 35% affordable housing figure on housing developments, and whether it was higher than the rest of the country. It was explained that different targets were set for different areas but that 35% was the figure set for the whole of the East of England.

An explanation was requested in respect of social housing and the split between social rented and social affordable. There was a Supplementary Planning Guidance document which provided the detail of how affordable housing would be delivered; the type of affordable housing provided should be proportional to the type of market housing provided in the scheme. That is if the scheme was mainly four bedroomed homes then the affordable element provided would be mainly four bedroomed homes.

In respect of the targets for new housing and jobs, Colchester had exceeded the housing target and new jobs were just about on target.

RESOLVED that implications of the publication of the final East of England Plan be noted.

6. Sustainability Appraisal

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration giving an explanation of sustainability appraisals (SAs) and describing how SAs have informed the Core Strategy and how they will contribute to the Site Allocations Development Plan document and Development Policies document.

Shelley Blackaby, Sustainability Officer, attended to assist the Committee in its deliberations.

A member of the Committee requested information on how it would be possible to acquire sufficient knowledge about a community to be able to give an accurate sustainability appraisal, and on which stakeholders were being consulted. It was explained that the Sustainability Appraisal process adopted by the Council was in line with the process set out in regional documents. The first stage of the process draws in a substantial amount of information by reviewing relevant policies, plans and programmes. From this information a baseline report was generated which was the subject of a consultation process. There was a statutory requirement to consult a small number of specified stakeholders, but the council had made the decision to consult a greater number and wider variety of stakeholders.

RESOLVED that explanation of Sustainability Appraisal of Local Development Documents be noted.



Local Development Framework Committee

Item
7

29 September 2008

Report of	Head of Strategic Policy & Regeneration	Author	Beverley McClean 01206 282480
Title	Proposed Planning Guidance Note – The Parish of Langham Village Design Statement		
Wards affected	Dedham and Langham		

This report seeks the approval of the Local Development Framework Committee to agree the adoption of the Village Design Statement as a Planning Guidance Note.

1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To agree the adoption of the Parish of Langham Village Design Statement (VDS) as a Planning Guidance Note.

2. Reasons for Decision(s)

- 2.1 A Village Design Statement (VDS) sets out clear and simple guidance for the design of all development in a parish, based upon its character. It is a guidance document produced by the parish/village community themselves. Adoption of the document will provide up to date information for anyone making a planning application in Langham.

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 To operate without the additional guidance.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 It is important that developers and members of the public are provided with good quality, relevant and up to date information before they submit a planning application. Planning Guidance adds detail to policies already contained within the Local Plan/Local Development Framework and works to span the gap between the plan/framework and a planning application.
- 4.2 The Parish of Langham Village Design Statement aims to establish the principles of conservation, preservation and good design within all new proposed developments within their area. It is not intended to nor will it stop change from happening, but it can help effect how any new development fits in to the existing parish vernacular. VDSs are intended

to influence the planning system, so that new development is in keeping with its surroundings while conserving and where appropriate enhancing the immediate environment.

- 4.3 A copy of the VDS is attached as an Appendix. Also attached is a letter from Langham Parish Council which sets out a number of changes to the document that have been noticed since publication.

5. Proposals

- 5.1 To complement the Local Development Framework it is expected that a comprehensive set of supplementary documents will be produced. This VDS is one of those documents and will provide guidance to assist developers, councillors, officers and the general public in decision making.

6. Strategic Plan References

- 6.1 Colchester's three corporate objectives are:
- To promote economic prosperity, tackle deprivation and foster social inclusion
 - To ensure the quality of life expected of a prestigious regional centre
 - To be the cleanest and greenest borough in the country.
- 6.2 This VDS has enabled the residents of Langham to become involved in the planning of their parish. In doing so they have been instrumental in progressing all three of the Councils Corporate Objectives.
- 6.2 As the VDS endeavours to cover all the issues underlying the three objectives it will be a useful tool in the realisation of these goals.

7.0 Consultation

- 7.1 No additional consultation is proposed before the adoption of the Guidance Note.
- 7.2 During the production of the document the Parish of Langham undertook multiple consultation exercises which enabled them to gain views from the public which have been incorporated into the final draft.
- 7.3 An explanation of the consultation undertaken is presented on page 57 of the document.

8. Publicity Considerations

- 8.1 None

9. Financial implications

9.1 None

10. Human Rights Implications

10.1 The document was produced using a range of methods in order to enable as many people as possible to respond regardless of gender, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age and race/ethnicity.

10.2 This document will work to increase individual human rights by increasing involvement in the planning process.

11. Community Safety Implications

11.1 None

12. Health and Safety Implications

12.1 None.

13. Risk Management Implications

13.1 The adoption of guidance notes is intended to reduce the risk of inappropriate development. It provides the opportunity to offer consistent advice to landowners, developers, officers, Councillors and members of the public.

LANGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Welcome to your copy of Langham's Village Design Statement. It is the product of much work by many people over a long period of time, not least by those who have delivered it to your door with the Parish Newsletter. I would like to thank all who have contributed and I hope that you enjoy reading it – after all, it reflects the views of the village, even if you yourself do not agree with every word!

As I am sure you know by now, Langham is the Essex Village of the Year. This is not because we are the prettiest or the most historical, but because we have a great sense of community. That too is the product of the energy and enthusiasm of an even greater number of people over a very long period of time. Our challenge now, as we prepare for English Village of the Year competition in 2009, is to continue to build on what has already been done and to show the next set of judges that we are not resting on our laurels.

How we do that is, of course, down to you, but the Parish Council want to help and we have therefore set up a Village Development Committee. Its purpose is **not** to decide what can be done, but rather to facilitate what **you** want to do, whether as individuals or members of an organisation. We don't see this process ending when the competition is over, but continuing indefinitely to make Langham a better place for all of us to live.

The people who drove the Village Design Statement are also keen to move on to the next stage – the production of a Parish Plan. This is an even more ambitious undertaking than the VDS. The latter is about the physical shape of the village, but the former is about all the other things that go on here. Employment, housing, transport, the environment, recreation and the services provided by local and central government are all possible components. As with the VDS, we want to involve as many people as possible and gather views through questionnaires. However, one significant difference will be the conclusion – **an action plan to guide us over the next few years**. It's a big job, but a very worthwhile one.

So on x October at 7.30 pm, come to the Community Centre to find out how you can contribute to the Parish Plan. Refreshments will be served. At the same time the VDS Association will be wound up and its assets transferred to the new Parish Plan Association.

With our new structures in place and looking to the future, we shall be in a strong position to win the prize of English Village of the Year.

I look forward to seeing you on x October.

Elizabeth Schofield

Chairman Langham Parish Council

P.S There are two small changes to the VDS:

Page 12 Recommendation 2 should read "New developments (whether housing or commercial/industrial) should make provision for sufficient parking off street or in designated parking bays"

Page 13 Recommendation 2 add "chosen" after "Materials should be"



VDS

VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT



LANGHAM VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS	1
INTRODUCTION	3
LANGHAM AND ITS HISTORY	4
THE CORE OF THE VILLAGE	6
NORTHERN SECTOR	7
THE BLACK BROOK VALLEY	8
THE SOUTHERN FARMLANDS	9
LODGE LANE AND THE AIRFIELD AREA	10
BUILDING STYLES AND DESIGNS	11
MATERIALS	13
WINDOWS AND DOORS	14
ROADS AND TRAFFIC CALMING	15
FOOTPATHS	16
WILDLIFE PRESERVATION	16
YOUNG PEOPLE'S VIEWS	17
FUTURE DEVELOPMENT	18
APPENDICES	19
1. Acknowledgements	
2. Practical Uses of the VDS	
3. Listed Buildings	
4. Footpath List	
5. Footpath Map	
6. Local Map	

Introduction

A Village Design Statement (VDS) is a community prepared assessment of a village's character and qualities. It focuses on those elements that make it special to its inhabitants and which create a sense of being different from the surrounding areas. For a village to be a community, it must be a dynamic society, which involves embracing change. However, it is vitally important to determine which changes will strengthen, rather than diminish, the sense of community which is so important to the continuation of a real village society. The VDS is, therefore, designed to identify which changes will be acceptable to the current residents with this aim in mind.

This VDS relates to the whole parish of Langham, although the focus is generally on those areas which contain the bulk of the population. It aims to provide guidance and recommendations to property owners and developers on future changes in the parish, focusing on those which would be welcome, as well as those aspects which should be conserved and protected. It also offers guidance to Council officers and Members in the determination of planning applications.

The project was initiated by Langham Parish Council. The first meeting was arranged in October 2005 and a committee was elected. The committee organised 24 volunteers to visit all parts of the village to survey and note suitable items, with photographs, for a presentation to the whole village in an exhibition. After a number of workshops, the first exhibition took place in May 2006 when invitations to comment on all aspects of the life of the village were made.

Two carefully prepared questionnaires, one for adults and one for young people, were issued and over 60% were returned. There was a strong and constructive response from the younger element of the village. A review was carried out at the VDS Annual General Meeting in December 2006 so that any further comments by parishioners could be considered by the VDS committee. A second exhibition was held in late May 2006. The draft statement was presented to the Parish Council in May 2007 and subsequently to the Colchester Borough Council in June 2007. The VDS was updated using further comments received. Copies are being provided to every household in the village. An acknowledgement of those who have contributed in many different ways is at Appendix 1.



The VDS has been based very much on the questionnaire responses, but as time has gone by, there have been new developments which are reflected here. More changes will come in the future and we want the VDS to be an ongoing process whose objective is to involve all those who wish to participate in the development of our village. The Parish Council strongly support this view and will do all they can to encourage it.



The parish of Langham lies about 6 miles north of Colchester. The river Stour forms the northern boundary of the long, roughly rectangular, parish; the Salary Brook, the southern boundary with Mile End in Colchester. The western boundary with Boxted follows field boundaries and a section of the Black Brook, a tributary of the Stour. The eastern boundary with Dedham and Ardleigh broadly follows the old main road from Colchester to Ipswich. (see map in appendices for details)

The land rises sharply about 30 metres from the Stour valley to the ridge at Langham Hall and the church. The rest of the parish forms a slightly rising and undulating plateau, cut into two distinct parts by the small but steep valley of the Black Brook, running west to east across its centre.

The past

The manor of Langham is mentioned in Domesday Book, when it was in the possession of Walter Tirel, who subsequently killed King William Rufus. Eventually, the manor passed to the Crown and Henry VIII gave it successively to three of his queens.

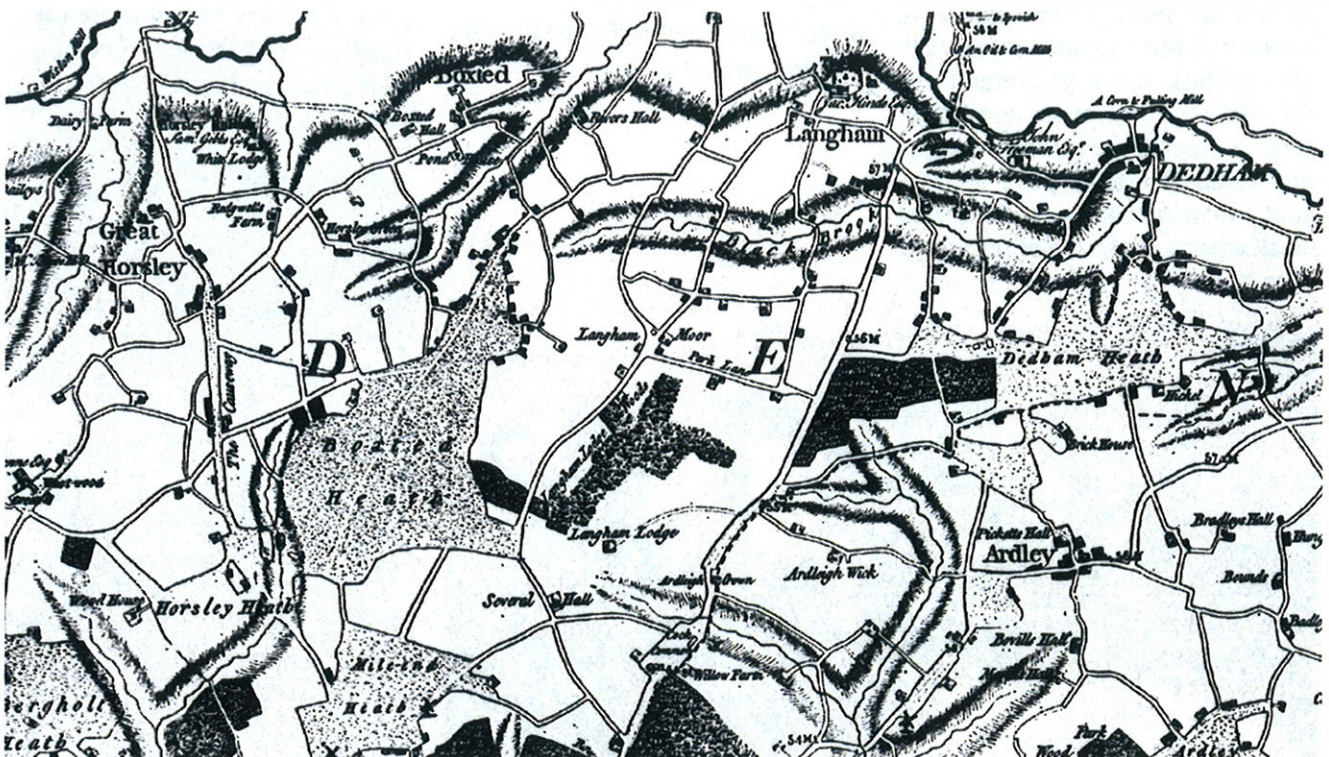
Before then, there is significant evidence of Neolithic settlement and Roman remains, particularly the sites of a number of Neolithic barrows and a Roman farmstead. Initial habitation and subsequent development seems to have begun in the north, on the site of the current Hall and church. Farming began here and then moved south, pausing for a while at the dividing line of the Black Brook. In

the Middle Ages, the land south of Park Lane was a Royal Forest, which meant that it was the last area to be farmed.

The resulting pattern of settlement has created a number of widely spread residential areas within the village, of which Whalebone Corner/the Hall in the north, Moor Road and Chapel Road in the west and St. Margaret's Cross were perhaps the earliest. However, by the nineteenth century, it seems clear that the commercial centre of the village was along School Road and Constable's picture of Langham church gives some idea of the environment at that time.

The overall pattern of development is one of a largely agricultural community, broadening out into cloth manufacturing in the thirteenth century, which contributed greatly to prosperity until it died out in the eighteenth century. In addition, the usual skills and trades required by the inhabitants of such a community were developed, but not to any great extent. Langham did not attract industry or social development of great note during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Langham and environs c1771



The present

The result of this pattern is a dispersed village, with no single centre of population. Instead, habitation is dispersed throughout most of the parish and there are still significant areas of agricultural land. Perhaps the most obvious feature is the large piece of arable land in the central area bounded by School Road, Wick Road, Park Lane and Moor Road. This large open space, in what might otherwise be the centre of the village, gives it its unique character and is highly valued by all residents, particularly the young people.

In terms of current land usage, there are light industrial areas at Lodge Lane, Gun Hill and School Road, but the remaining land use is agricultural or residential.

Its current population is about 1000, spread through some 450 households. The majority of the population works in the service industries, either in Colchester, Ipswich or London. There is, however, a larger than proportionate retired population, who are very active. This, together with the young people, creates a sense of activity during the working day which may be absent in other villages.

Perhaps because of this, and despite the commuting nature of the

workforce, there is a very strong community spirit. The destruction by fire of the old village hall in 1985 resulted in a determination to create a new and superior Community Centre, which continues successfully to this day. It currently provides facilities for a number of village associations, including Scouts and Brownies, and the Langham Pre-School. More recently, the Community Centre facilities have been expanded by the provision of tennis courts by the Langham Tennis Club, and a Millennium Garden created by the local Women's Institute.

Similarly, the closure of the only village shop in 2003 was met by a determination to create a community shop, staffed entirely by volunteers, which has now celebrated its third anniversary.

The local primary school (dating from 1850) is another centre of community life, taking as it does most of the primary age children in the village. At its entrance is the village War Memorial, which has recently been rebuilt. Over 150 people turned up to participate in its rededication by the Rector of Langham.

Naturally, the village pub, the Shepherd and Dog, is also an important asset to the community.



The Community Shop



The Rector dedicates War Memorial



The audience



The Shepherd and Dog

The centre of Langham looking from Wick Road towards Moor Road and showing Park Lane to the left and School Road to the right



The central part of the village consists of the rough rectangle formed by School Road, Moor Road, Wick Road and Park Lane. Together with Perry Lane, Chapel Road and the High Street, this area contains the majority of the village's population, as well as the schools, Community Centre, recreation ground, children's play area and football pitches, pub and community shop.

One of the three industrial areas in the parish is also based here and contains engineering and plant hire businesses. The site, on School Road, was thought to be acceptable but no further industrial development should take place there. There are current traffic problems with heavy vehicles which need to be resolved. The increased heavy goods traffic going to this site is proving a problem for road safety, given its proximity to the primary school and the lack of pavements on both sides of the road.

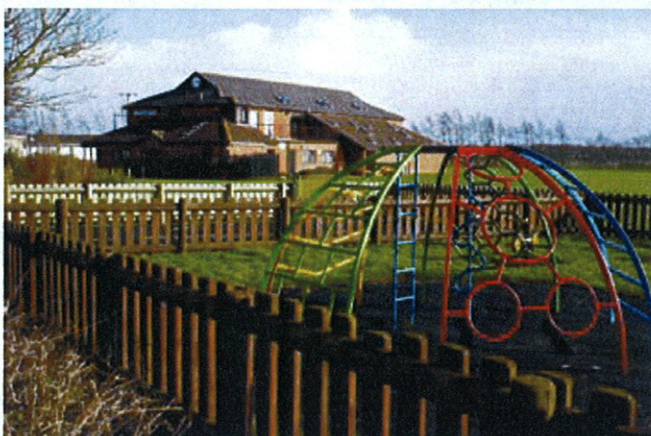
There are several mediaeval houses along School Road, but they are interspersed with more modern buildings and the nineteenth-century mansion which is now Homestead School. Moor Road and Wick Road consist mainly of more recent building, with a few older properties, but are much more built up, to the point where few additional houses could be built in them. The same is true of Chapel Road, although there is some space outside the village envelope. Perry Lane is largely built along one side only, the other currently being agricultural land. Park Lane is less developed, especially in its central part.

Recent development in this area has taken the form of infilling, rather than large developments and most new houses have been in local styles and in keeping with the rest of the village. It is clear from the answers to the questionnaires that this is what the great majority of the respondents would prefer and that they would be strongly opposed to ribbon development along those roads with major open spaces.

*Top:
Heavy vehicles in the village*

*Bottom left:
The children's play area*

*Bottom right:
Mediaeval houses on School Road*





The northern sector of the parish incorporates the floor and southern side of the Stour Valley, together with extensive farmlands. Its boundary to the east follows the line of the old A12 and to the west it incorporates the Low Lift Water Works. Its southern boundary is the Black Brook.

The northern part of this sector is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which inspired John Constable and appeared in many of his pictures. Much of this historic landscape, consisting of meadows and arable land, is largely unchanged since Constable's time, as may be seen from his paintings, although the recent formation of a wildlife lake and small mixed wood on old meadow land enhances the present views.

The twelfth-century Parish Church of St. Mary and the Langham Hall Estate are set in exquisite surroundings on the ridge above the Stour valley side, adjacent to the Essex Way, a walking path which follows the route of a mediaeval track way through the Essex forests. Around the Hall and Church is a mixture of grazing, parkland and farmland, together with wildlife enclosures on the Langham Hall Estate, which add to the beauty of the area.

Farmhouses and agricultural buildings are dotted around, together with cottages purpose built for Water Works employees in the 1930s, at the time of construction of the Works, reservoir and pumping station.

Further south is an area of good arable and grazing land, with a large number of springs, brought about by its geological formation. Whilst not designated as an AONB, it has many key features of its neighbouring region. The extensive orchards of the early twentieth century have been replaced by more open farmland, giving the area a distinctly rural aspect, with extensive hedging, two-way tracks and single narrow roads.

Housing density throughout this sector is very low, consisting mainly of seventeenth and eighteenth-century properties, together with other detached more modern properties in a range of styles, principally situated along the Dedham-Boxted Road. The only industry here is a small distribution depot on this road and a small industrial area off Gun Hill. The Black Brook valley divides this area from the rest of the village and its peaceful seclusion provides a varied and well distributed wildlife habitat. This area in particular illustrates the liking expressed by the young people of Langham for a rural peaceful environment.

Top: A part of the Essex Way

Middle: Aerial view of the Water works

Right: The parish church



The Black Brook Valley itself is within the Colchester Conservation Area and forms a very picturesque area, well known and loved by local residents.

Accessed by winding lanes, with several popular footpaths running through the valley, the area contains Hornestreetfield, a conservation area owned and managed by a consortium of village residents, Hobday Wood, a privately owned arboretum, and other wooded land and fields which encourage wildlife. A variety of farm and other housing from the sixteenth to twentieth centuries is located here, with an unobtrusive sewerage plant situated in the valley.



Left: The Black Brook

Bottom: Pond at Hornestreet Field





Top: Swans

Middle: Yellow wagtails pay a visit

Bottom: Hundred Lane

Right Aerial view of the southern farmlands, showing the old runway and Moor Road at the top.

Almost one third of the area of the parish consists of the area south of Park Lane. This is largely arable farm land with very few houses. It forms a very important “green break” between the village and the town of Colchester. It also contains the remains of the Second World War Boxted Airfield and the industrial area at Lodge Lane. (See below).

Before 1940 this area consisted of many small fields with hedges; however, the hedges were removed during the construction of the airfield. After the war, the majority of the area reverted to farmland and was laid to orchard, with a few hedges and lines of trees planted along the edge of the old runways, which soften the appearance of the plateau and give it a distinctive character.

It contains two small reservoirs, which are used for irrigation purposes, but also effectively serve as a small nature reserve. Swans have nested there, they are home to coots, moorhens and a variety of ducks (mallard, tufted, widgeon and shoveller) and in the summer, attract the comparatively rare yellow wagtail. The surrounding woodland conceals roe deer and foxes. The remaining arable land supports a wide range of birds, including many Skylarks. A recent change of ownership has resulted in more intensive farming, which has reduced the areas available for wild animals, making it all the more important to retain the unspoilt areas which remain.

At the western edge of this area, forming part of the parish boundary is the early phase of the Black Brook, before it turns through 90° and flows through Langham, cutting the parish in half. The bed of the valley varies in character from areas where it is wide to areas where there are steep banks and the bed is narrow.

The wide areas make an excellent site for growing cricket bat willow as there is good soil above a water retaining base of clay. Areas where the valley is steep and the bed of the river has been left for many years form a rare habitat called ‘alder carr’. This forms where there is poor drainage and trees in a narrow valley fall, partially blocking the river, and so an area of waterlogged land develops. One of the only trees which can survive in waterlogged soil is the alder and so an alder carr habitat develops. A good example of the habitat is at the bottom of Hundred Lane, the bridleway which joins Langham and Boxted. Wet woodland, of which alder carr is a major constituent, is a target habitat for the Forestry Commission and the Biodiversity Action Plan and as such there are national and local targets for its conservation and restoration.



During the Second World War, an airfield was constructed on land south of Park Lane (and a little to the north) for the use of the US Army Air Force. Three Groups, all with outstanding records, used the airfield, which was known as Boxted to avoid confusion with a similar airfield at Langham in Norfolk. Runways and taxiways are still evident and there are still a few Nissen huts. A memorial to the airmen who served there is at the edge of the airfield and serves as a focal point for commemorative ceremonies. Buildings on the airfield are not listed and a number of Nissen huts were dismantled in early 2007. The original Operations Room is still extant.

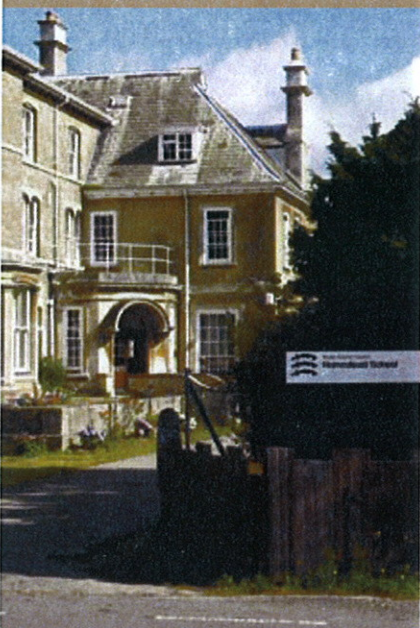


Top: *Nissen huts on the old airfield*

To the south of the Airfield, in the area bordering Lodge Lane, are a number of residential and business premises, some of which are still housed in the wartime airfield buildings. Other business premises have been designed in a barn style, in keeping with the environment; the remaining wartime buildings are of significant historic interest, as is Langham Lodge, a Grade II listed building. Old Ipswich Road, to the east of the A12 trunk road, which ends as a cul-de-sac, marks the border of Langham and Ardleigh and contains a range of properties, mostly set in their own grounds. A small number of properties and a hotel are situated within Langham to the east of the A12. Vehicular access to Langham from this area is only possible by using the A12.



Bottom: *The Lodge Lane Business Park*



Top: *Timber framed thatched cottage*

Middle: *Homestead School*

Bottom: *Moor Road*

Langham is characterised by a rich variety of property, deriving from its long history.

St. Mary's Church, dating from the twelfth century, is mainly pebble rubble with iron pudding-stone and dressings of oolite and limestone. The nearby listed Langham Hall is a grand, Georgian two-storey, six-bay house with more recent estate houses of red brick and flint; Church Farm House is sixteenth century, timber framed and plastered. Other property in the area is largely seventeenth and eighteenth century, with mainly detached twentieth-century housing situated along the Dedham-Boxted road.

About 10% of the buildings in Langham are listed. A list is provided at Appendix 3.

The development of buildings in the village has been influenced by its situation as a farming community and the growth of small hamlets (e.g. Langham Moor, St Margaret's Cross, and Blacksmith's Corner) at road junctions. A range of very picturesque timber-framed thatched and tiled cottages and farmhouses from the sixteenth century and earlier, are located in various parts of the village, interspersed with twentieth-century housing. Some of the earlier properties are listed as of special historical interest; others wait to be so listed.

Nineteenth-century property development is limited, one major exception being the Oaks, now Homestead School, a large mansion in the early Victorian style.

Two significant twentieth-century developments with characteristic building styles in Langham are the Water Works, designed in the Art Deco style of the 1930s and Boxted Airfield, built during the Second World War, with Nissen huts and other buildings for service personnel. There is also a small amount of largely semi-detached local authority housing from this period.

Post-war residential development in Langham has largely consisted of detached houses and bungalows, located in a line alongside the roads, which allows many properties a view of open farmland to the rear. The styles of property are in keeping with the period of construction, mainly faced in brick, with design developing from the open, functional appearance of the 1960s to the more vernacular style of the 1970s and 1980s. The growth of car ownership has required garaging for properties, some of which have been constructed directly in front of properties, which may adversely affect their aspect.



It is clear that, in the last twenty years, significant efforts have been made to design and construct both residential and commercial property which is sympathetic to and in keeping with the local character of the village. Barn-style commercial property has been constructed on what used to be Boxted Airfield and most recently built houses have imitated rural styles of property (barns, farmhouses and Suffolk cottages in Wick Road and Park Lane, for example). Other new build properties have been constructed in Regency, Georgian and other styles aimed at harmonising with the established buildings in the village.

With the growth in property values has come a growth in the number of planning applications for extensions

and additions to property in the Parish. Given the diversity of style, age and construction of houses, many applications clearly take into consideration the existing features in order to enhance and improve the appearance of each property. However, there are examples of extensions which, because of insufficient attention given to scale, design or materials, have a detrimental effect on the appearance and character of the property and others in the surrounding area.

The variety of buildings from different eras means that no single style predominates in the village. This diversity contributes significantly to its character, which is to be welcomed and protected.



Recommendations

1. New housing development should be sympathetic in scale, design and materials to surrounding buildings.
2. Any new development should make provision for sufficient off-street parking.
3. Buildings which are not currently listed, including those on the old airfield, which fit the English Heritage criteria for listing, should be considered for listing.
4. Design harmony and diversity should be aimed for, depending upon the particular circumstances of any prospective development.
5. Extensions should enhance, improve and be sympathetic to the character of the existing property and planning applications should be decided appropriately.
6. Property boundaries in the form of hedging, fencing and brick walls are part of the distinctive character of Langham and should be encouraged.



Top: Some Pargetting

Middle: A variety of roofing materials

Bottom: A gabled roof

As may be seen, the buildings in Langham are very diverse in age, style and construction. Roofs are thatch, tile or slate, whilst exteriors are brick, render or weatherboard. Despite the variety, the overall aspect of the buildings in different areas of the village is in harmony with each other. The range of surfaces, including brick, plaster, weatherboard and pargetting provide a pleasing contrast and it can be preferable to have contrasting materials on separate properties rather than a poor match.

Roof design and materials have an important bearing on the appearance of buildings in Langham. Most have pitched roofs with tile or slate fixings whereas some older properties are thatched. In some cases, flat and "lean to" roofs tend to detract from the overall appearance of the buildings, particularly where they form part of an extension to the building.



Recommendations

1. Roof design and materials should be in keeping with the age, style and construction of the building.
2. Materials should be to blend as far as is possible with the existing building and its immediate neighbours in order to maintain both harmony and diversity of styles.

Together with the basic building materials, the style and appearance of an area is set by the combination of windows and doors and by the pargetting of rendered buildings.

Windows are a key design feature and different types of building, whether timber framed, Georgian, Victorian, Modernist, or post-Modernist are frequently defined by their window styles. Sympathetic treatment of existing buildings to a new use can provide a good blend of the old and new.

Doors and doorways provide focal points for many buildings and their scale, design and materials often characterise their era. It is possible for renovations to be undertaken to these elements with insufficient attention to the materials used or style of building. The use of inappropriate materials and design may have a detrimental effect not only on the integrity of the property itself, but also on the harmony of the immediate neighbourhood. An example is the replacement of a flat bay Victorian terrace window with a Georgian-style bay window. Similarly, doors and entrances may be relocated or inappropriate materials used with replacement doors. However, it is not necessary always to use traditional materials to provide the same overall effect. For example, Upvc windows and doors are acceptable providing that the original design characteristics are retained.



Recommendation

1. Consideration should be given to the use of appropriate design and materials in the replacement or renovation of windows and doors.

Top: Interesting doors

Bottom: Sympathetic windows



Because of the village's proximity to Colchester and the A12, its roads are increasingly used as "rat runs" in the rush hours and heavy vehicles use them to change direction on the A12. Speeds are often excessive and Park Lane, Moor Road, School Road and Wick Road all suffer in this respect. Despite this, there was no great support for changes in either the extent or the level of speed limits and it is likely that the recent deployment of Community Speed Watch teams will have more effect than either.

Nor was there any great support for traffic calming measures, although practical safety measures were strongly supported. Improving visibility through proper maintenance of hedges and verges and providing more passing places on narrow roads are examples. In addition, heavy lorries are wearing away the edges of many village roads and making driving hazardous. Action needs to be taken both to prevent this and also to conduct proper repairs, rather than the present patching.

Young people were if anything more concerned about road safety and more inclined to support measures to slow traffic, no doubt because they spend more of their journeys outside the cocoon of the car. They were also keen to see more pavements in the village.

Parking does not appear to be a major issue in general terms, although there are undoubtedly certain points of difficulty, where people park on verges and pavements. As on similar subjects, the status quo seemed to have most support. People in general liked the appearance of the village as it is and did not want to spoil it with yellow lines, different road surface colouring, traffic calming, pedestrian crossings or street lighting. Areas for improvement clearly included better maintenance of roadside ditches and drains and the reduction of noise from the A12. There was also strong support for the harmonisation of the design of street signs throughout the village.

Top: Community Speed Watch team

Bottom: Congestion!

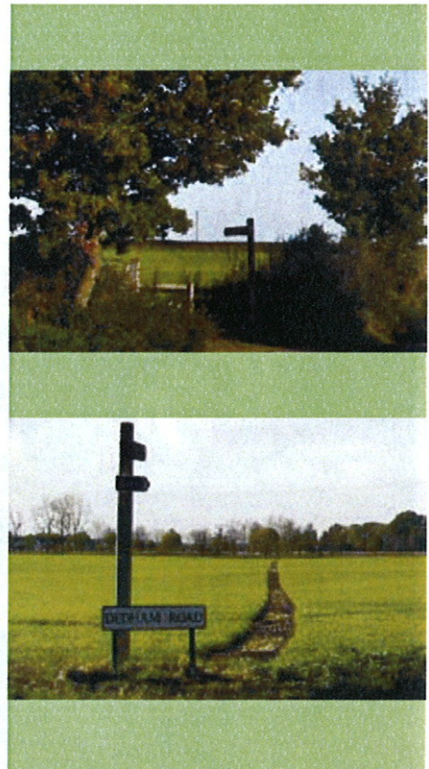
Recommendations

1. Practical measures to improve road safety, including cutting back hedges and verges, should be introduced wherever possible and given priority over physical traffic calming.
2. Consideration should be given to improving areas for parking at those places where demand leads to parking on pavements and verges.
3. Street sign design should be harmonised.
4. The County Council should address the problem of deterioration of rural road surfaces caused by heavy traffic.
5. Additional pavements should be constructed at particularly dangerous sites.

There is an extensive network of footpaths through out the village, many of which are well used. It is clear from responses to the survey that villagers value the countryside and their access to it. A list of footpaths and a map is at Appendix 4.

Issues relating to footpaths fall into one of three areas: protection, publicity and maintenance. The Parish Council already undertakes a role in the first area, although statutory responsibility lies with the County Council. It would probably also be concerned with the second, particularly the strongly supported suggestion that a village map showing footpaths and points of interest should be put on public display. This has now been done, but further

efforts, such as a printed version, would no doubt be welcomed. As for maintenance, this seems to be left to voluntary efforts or the goodwill of individual landowners. The latter more than fulfil their statutory obligations in some areas of the parish, but this is not the case in others. Greater coordination of these efforts could pay considerable dividends in the form of useable footpaths around the year.



Recommendation

1. The Parish Council should further publicise the footpath network and actively ensure maintenance of footpaths in the future.

Wildlife Preservation



Wildlife abounds in the village and is seen as an important part of the benefits of living here. The idea that projects which create more natural habitats for wildlife should be supported received very strong support. Inevitably, however, there are balances to be sought between increased wildlife and farming practices. Hens and foxes, to quote

an obvious example, do not mix well. If the current situation is to be improved upon, or even maintained (there are areas where farming is becoming more intensive), there is a need for some body to take an overview and coordinate action. This may be the Parish Council or some ad hoc body.

Recommendation

1. The protection and stimulation of wildlife habitats should be encouraged throughout the parish.



I like Langham because



Top: A young person's view of Langham

Middle: Class discussion

Bottom: The 'pod' where the older youngsters meet

Amongst the children and young people working with the committee there was general appreciation about being consulted and included in the village design statement process and several expressed interest in being further involved in village consultations.

The Youth Questionnaire secured a response rate of almost 80%. Some of the questions were general and replicated those in the adult questionnaire, but others were specific to the concerns of young people. Of the latter, the main thrust of the responses was that there were not enough facilities in the village for their social and recreational needs. When asked about specific facilities, there was strong support for a public swimming pool and an all-weather sports pitch.

On the more general questions, the responses tended to mirror those of the adult questionnaire, except in the area of road safety, where they were more conscious of the dangers presented by speeding vehicles.

In terms of specific youth concerns, the youth responses identified that there were generally adequate facilities and activities for children, but inadequate provision for the social and recreational needs of young people in the village. Both children and young people's feedback comments identified improving sports facilities through provision of outdoor facilities; a skate park, all weather pitch/ multi-sport pitch, additional tennis courts, netball and basketball equipment. Comments and suggestions for indoor facilities ranged from additional clubs; gym, judo, dance, through to a sports centre with squash courts, multi-sport courts and a swimming pool. There was a noteworthy statement, and a 91.5% agreement, that the Community Centre clock should always display the correct time. The children and young people's comments identified there was need for a youth centre/ club to provide indoor facilities and other activities in order to meet up with friends and mix with other children and young people.

The youth responses to more general questions concerning the current and future situation in Langham mirrored those of the adult questionnaire. In particular the retention of trees, woodland, farmland, rivers, reservoirs and open spaces were valued by over 90% of the youth respondents as significantly important to the appearance and character of the village. This was echoed in the children's many comments about 'open space', 'makes you feel in the country' & 'nice to walk in the country'.

The Boxted World War II airfield was identified by children and young people as in need of protection as a place of historic and present day importance for present and future generations. Many references to the Boxted World War II Airfield described it as 'historical' & 'part of our history'.

The children and young people also expressed the opinion that the appearance of existing buildings should be used as a measure for any future development in the village, and that all development should be kept to a minimum.

The youth responses made specific reference to matters of health and safety. Road safety was the main issue with children and young people expressing concern that traffic exceeded the speed limit of 30mph in the village. Therefore they did not feel safe when riding their bicycles around Langham or when having to walk along roads without pavements. Other issues identified related to the need for additional litter bins and dog waste bins, and designation of official bus stops.

Perhaps the most important aspect of a VDS is to give guidance to those proposing major developments in the village. Langham is not a large village, and it lacks many of the facilities which greater size would bring – more shops, entertainment, doctors’ surgery etc.

The very clear message from the questionnaire was that the overwhelming majority of the villagers were content with things broadly as they were.

There was a widely expressed view that the number of new houses to be built over the next 15 years should not exceed a relatively small number. Almost 60% of respondents put this number at 25, with a further 18% being prepared to go to 50 and 15% wanting no new houses at all. Only 6% of respondents were prepared to go further than 50.

The responses from the young people mirrored this wish to stay small.

Similarly, there was strong support (92%) for expanding the development line (at present tightly drawn around the village) only if any expansion was in keeping with the surrounding area. In terms of the size of development, there was strong opposition to anything greater than clusters of 5, and the preference of the majority would be for individual dwellings.

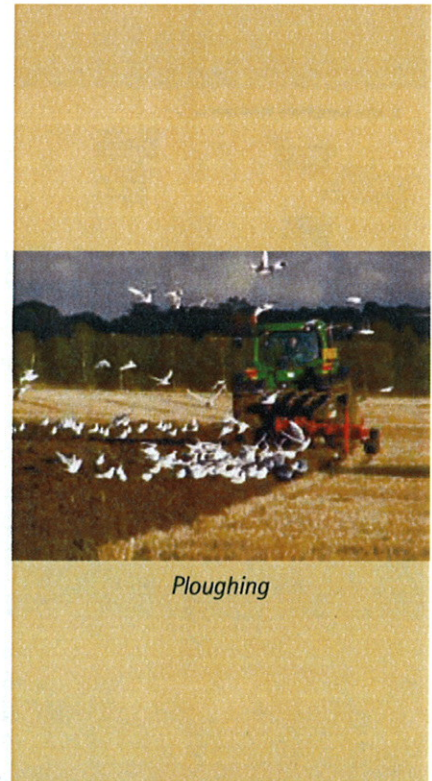
There was less agreement about the types of dwelling, but strong support for accommodation for first time buyers, the elderly and families. Relatively recent examples of such housing already exist in the village. Executive housing and housing for rental were less popular.

Over 80% of the respondents to the main questionnaire expressed the view that Langham had sufficient facilities for its inhabitants and that it wished to maintain its current character as a village, separated from Colchester by significant areas of countryside.

The countryside as such is clearly an important issue for the inhabitants of Langham, and especially for the young people.

There is a strong feeling that the large expanses of agricultural land so close

to the main centres of population, as well as the more scenic areas, are a vital part of the village’s character and need to be preserved. Easy access is important, as is the creation of more wildlife areas. The community effort to create Hornstreetfield shows what can be done, and some local landowners have shown how the encouragement of wildlife can be combined with modern farming practice. This approach should be congratulated and encouraged.



Ploughing

Recommendations

1. The essentially rural character of the parish should be maintained and enhanced
2. Village buildings, special sites and trees should be reviewed to identify those worthy of protection.
3. There may be a case for new single dwellings in the parish, although the numbers built by 2021 should be strictly limited.
4. Recent development has taken the form of infilling, rather than large developments and most new houses have been in a vernacular style and in keeping with the rest of the village. It is clear that this is what the great majority of the respondents would prefer and that they would be strongly opposed to ribbon development along those roads with major open spaces and to any large scale development.
5. The current industrial site on School Road was judged to be just acceptable, but no further industrial development should take place there. Care needs to be taken with any new industrial site to avoid the traffic problems created on School Road. Large scale development should not be allowed.
6. Footpaths and bridleways should always be kept clear and accessible and should be developed and promoted for local recreational use.
7. It is important that hedgerows and green verges are preserved.
8. There was very strong support for the creation of more natural habitats for wildlife and the retention of farmland features and woodland.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, our thanks and appreciation go to all the residents of Langham for their contribution to the contents of the Langham Village Design Statement. In this respect, it is the product of the whole community.

In particular we should like to mention the unstinting help provided by the following organisations and individuals:

The Langham Parish Council, for its continuing support.

The Dedham Vale AONB & Stour Valley Project, especially Matt Hullis for his enthusiastic and practical guidance in launching the project successfully.

The Rural Community Council of Essex, and in particular Stella Meesters, for all their assistance as facilitators of the various events and for their guidance and help at different stages of the project.

The Officers of Colchester Borough Council for the benefit of their experience. Our Ward Councillor Christopher Garnett has been an excellent source of advice as the project has progressed.

Completed Essex Village Design Statements served as continuing sources of inspiration in the preparation of the Langham publication.

Such a project cannot succeed without financial support and we are indebted to:

The Langham Parish Council for its assistance with graphic design.
Fleming Media LLP for its sponsorship of printing and reprographics.

In addition, we are very grateful for the contributions, in cash or kind, from many members of the community.

Committee

Tony Ellis Chairman

Rona Hammond Secretary

Richard Watson Treasurer

Andrew Stacey

John Cairns

David Meachem

David Rawlings

Vanessa Rawlings

Mark Pertwee

Andrew Benns

HOW TO MAKE PRACTICAL USE OF THE VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT (VDS)

Study the VDS thoroughly, especially the recommendations, photographs, maps and illustrations.

Look at the whole of your property and compare it to those close by. Do they all fit together or are there particular characteristic or distinguishing features. What aspects of your property make it individual and stand out from other properties or landscape features?

Now check the specific details of your property, including the doors, windows and frames, eaves, construction materials etc.

Review the setting of your property, including the use of boundary materials, such as hedges, garden features etc. and its position in relation to other properties.

If you consider making any changes to your property, check to see how far any proposed changes will harmonise with the recommendations of the VDS. This will allow you to review any elements which may be uncharacteristic or out of keeping with your neighbourhood.

Next, you should consult the Colchester Borough Council Planning Department, your Architect and Builder and discuss your Design Assessment with them. This will allow them to comment and suggest any improvements. Planning information is readily available on the Colchester Borough Council website: www.colchester.gov.uk . The Council also has various leaflets and advisory notes which will assist in the consideration of any application for planning consent.

For listed buildings, it is advisable to consult the Borough Conservation Officer before submitting an application for Listed Building Consent. Similarly, if you consider your property fulfils the criteria for listing, you should contact English Heritage in the first instance, which is responsible for listings.

LANGHAM'S LISTED BUILDINGS – OFFICIAL LIST

Dedham Road and to the north of it

1. Church of St. Mary
2. School north west of Church of St. Mary
3. Church Farmhouse (formerly listed as Constable Cottage)
4. The Hall
5. Barn west of The Hall
6. Barn north west of The Hall
7. Langham Hall Farmhouse
8. The Old House
9. Holly Tree Cottage
10. Walnut Tree Cottage
11. Highfield Cottage (now sub-divided)
12. Old Whalebone Cottage (a sub-division of Highfield Cottage)
13. Whalebone House
14. Pond Villa
15. Redhouse
16. Broomhouse
17. Ewen's Farmhouse
18. Valley House

Chapel Road

1. Yew Tree Cottage

Greyhound Hill

1. Wyborne
2. Mount Pleasant

Grove Hill

1. Pungford Cottages
2. Langford Hall
3. Grove Cottage

Langham Lane

1. Maltings Farmhouse
2. Maltings Farm Cottage

Lodge Lane

1. Langham Lodge

Moor Road

1. Bumblebee Cottage (formerly listed as Munson's Cottage)
2. Chaplins Farmhouse
3. Adelphi Cottages (Nos. 1 & 2)
4. Moor Cottages (Nos. 1 & 2)

Old Ipswich Road

1. Thorpe Ley

Old Mill Road

1. Mill Farmhouse
2. The Fens

Park Lane

1. Langham Oak Cottage (formerly known as Thatched Cottage)
2. Floral Dene
3. Old Park House (formerly known as New House)
4. Mantons
5. Pond Farm Cottage
6. Park Lane Farmhouse

Rectory Road

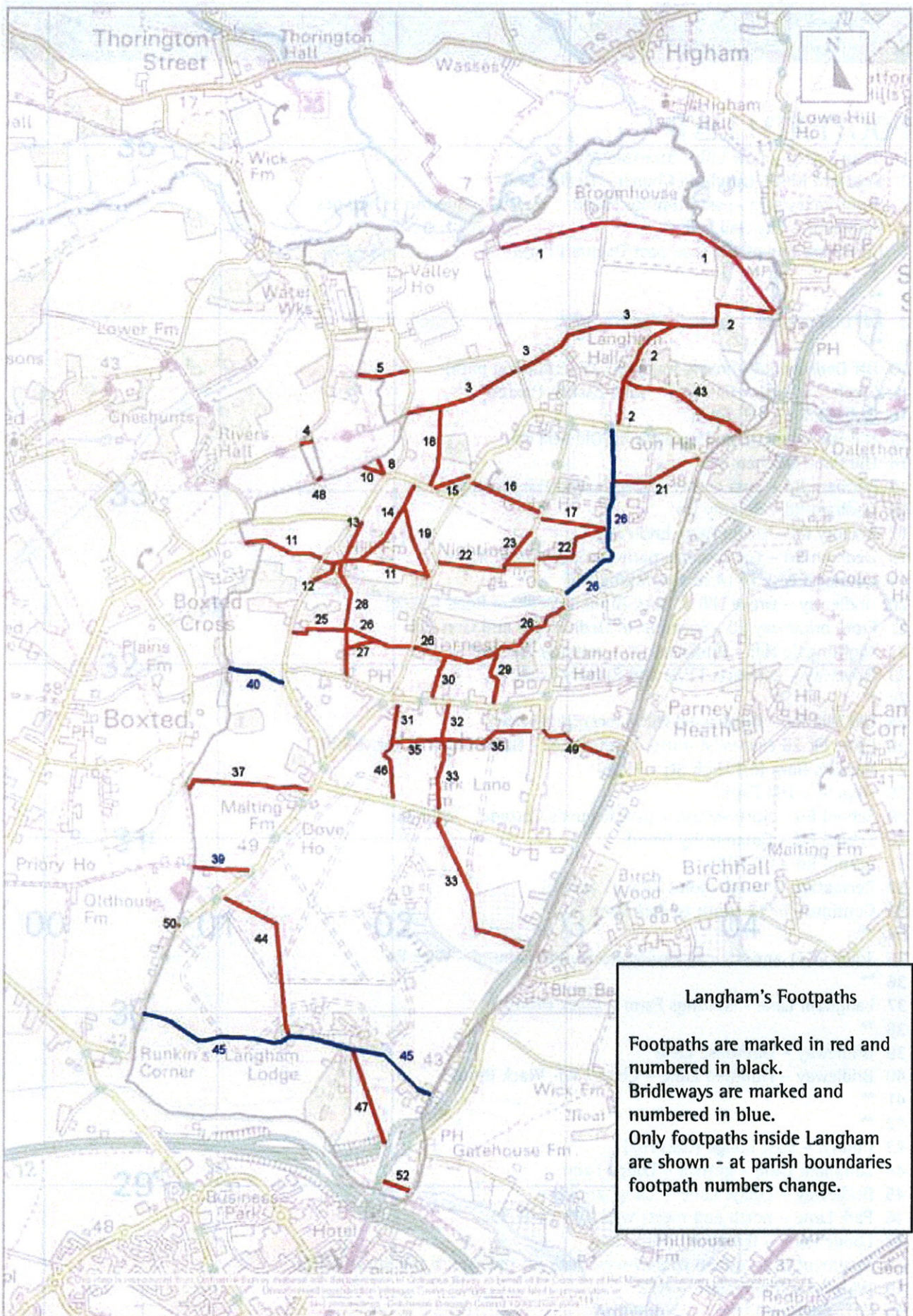
1. Forge Cottage
2. Smithy south of and adjoining Forge Cottage
3. Glebe Farmhouse
4. Barn east of Glebe Farmhouse
5. Glebe House (Old Rectory)

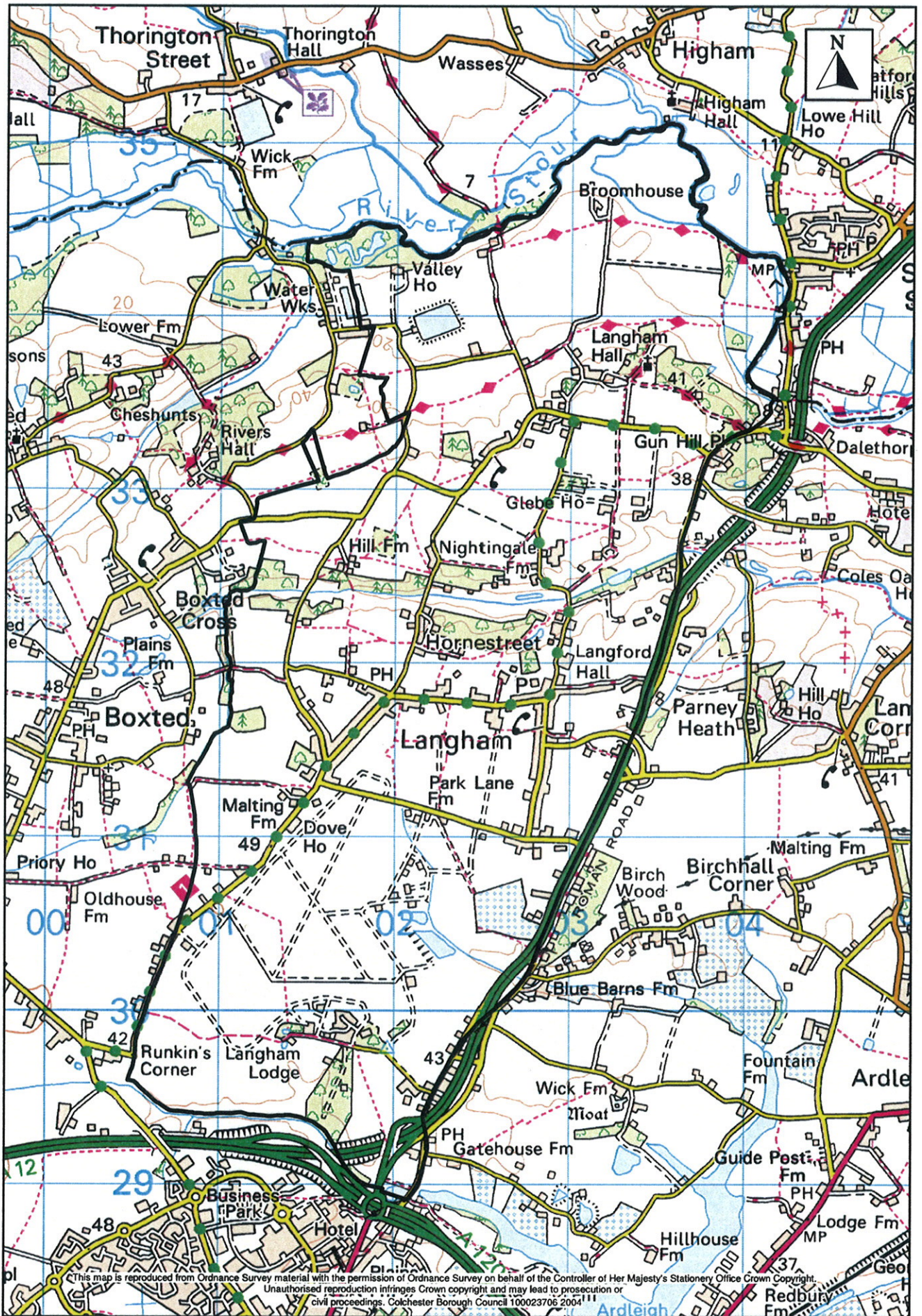
School Road

1. Tudor Cottage Farm
2. Lyme Cottage
3. Bakers
4. Little Oaks Barn
5. School Farmhouse (Nos. 1 & 2)
6. Keepers Cottage

FOOTPATH LIST

- 1 Stour Valley – Low Lift – Stratford Mill
- 2 Stratford Mill – Langham Church – Dedham Rd
- 3 Stour Valley side –past Primrose Wood – towards Alderton’s Cottages
- 4 Fragment – Sky Hall Hill
- 5 Continues line of the road past Docura’s Farm
- 6 **
- 7 **
- 8 Off Dedham Rd – towards Plumb’s Farm
- 9 **
- 10 Off Dedham Rd – meets fragment 48 (east-west path)
- 11 Greyhound Hill –Hill Farm – west-east to Boxted
- 12 Old Mill Rd – Hill Farm
- 13 Hill Fm – junction of Dedham Rd/Old Mill Rd
- 14 Hill Fm – Dedham Rd
- 15 Dedham Rd – cuts corner of Greyhound Hill junction
- 16 Dedham Rd – Rectory Rd
- 17 Rectory Rd – Glebe Farm bridleway
- 18 Dedham Rd – north-south path- connects to FP3
- 19 Connects with FP14 to Greyhound Hill
- 20 Bridleway – Grove Hill at Back Brook – Dedham Road (lodge)
- 21 From bridleway 20 – junction of Dedham Rd and Gun Hill
- 22 Nightingale Hill – Bridleway 20 – recently diverted
- 23 Driveway – connects FP22 and Rectory Road
- 24 **
- 25 Old Mill Rd – Greyhound Hill – recently diverted
- 26 From FP 26 east-west route- Hornestreet – Black Brook at Grove Hill
- 27 Bardle’s Barn (off High St) – FP26
- 28 High St – Hill Farm
- 29 School Rd – north-south – past Keeper’s Cottage – to FP26
- 30 School Rd – Community Wood
- 31 School Rd – FP FP35
- 32 Recreation Ground – joins FP’s 33 and 35
- 33 Continues FP32 south to Park Lane
- 34 **
- 35 Joins FP31 and 46 – alongside Recreation Ground – Wick Rd
- 36 **
- 37 Langham Lane – Matings Farm – Black Brook
- 38 **
- 39 Bridleway – Oathouse Lane
- 40 Bridleway – Hundred Lane – Chapel Rd- Black Brook
- 41 **
- 42 **
- 43 Church – East Lodge (Gun Hill)
- 44 Langham Lane – airfield – Lodge Lane
- 45 Bridleway – Lodge Lane – Langham Lane
- 46 Park Lane – north end meets with FP’s 31 & 35
- 47 Lodge Lane – flyover A12 link road
- 48 Fragment in Langham of east-west path on the side of the Stour Valley
- 49 Wick Rd – Birchfield R – A12
- 50 Off Langham Lane
- 51 **
- 52 Ramada Hotel – Ardleigh Reservoir







Local Development Framework Committee

Item

8

29 September 2008

Report of	Head of Strategic Policy & Regeneration	Author	Laura Chase ☎ 282473
Title	Supply of Flats in Colchester		
Wards affected	All		

The purpose of this report is to update members in respect of the supply of flats in Colchester

1. Decision(s) Required

1.1 Members are asked to note the information below.

2. Reasons for Decision(s)

2.1 To ensure Members are aware of the planning issues surrounding the supply of flats in Colchester.

3. Alternative Options

3.1 None.

4. Supporting Information

4.1 National Context

A recent report by the property analysts Jones Lang LaSalle identified an oversupply of flats in a number of UK cities, particularly in the north. Cardiff, Bristol, Poole, Ipswich, Bristol and Norwich were also considered to have an oversupply, but Colchester was not mentioned. (<http://forum.globalhousepricecrash.com/lofiversion/index.php/t29926.html>)

Planning policy was considered to be the culprit because of the encouragement given to high density town centre regeneration as an alternative to unsustainable greenfield sprawl. The property industry, however, tends to ignore the structural financial issues that have created a problem. Clearly, there are a wide range of global financial issues that are causing a recession and affecting the overall state of the housing market.

Particular issues include:

- The high costs of inner city land and brownfield remediation costs which lead to the need to maximise the number of units built to ensure profit.
- The rise of the buy-to-let market. The rapid growth of this segment of the rental market has reinforced the treatment of housing as a source of profit rather than shelter, leading to problems with negative equity, maintenance and a lack of incentive for community infrastructure investment.
- Tightening of mortgage markets. The credit crunch has restricted the availability of mortgages to those on lower incomes, which has decreased the number of people wishing to buy flats, but has increased demand for rentals.

4.2 National Planning Policy

PPS3 (Housing)– National guidance in PPS3 requires local authorities to plan for a variety of housing, 'particularly in terms of tenure and price and a mix of different households'. These are considered to be the key variables in building successful mixed communities and no guidance is provided on specifying splits between houses and flats. High design quality is considered to be fundamental to the success of any new housing scheme, whether flats or houses.

4.3 Colchester context

Flats continue to represent a relatively small percentage of the overall housing stock in Colchester. In 2001, about 15% of the housing stock was represented by flats in Colchester, compared with a national average of 19.4% in England (Strategic Housing Market Assessment, 2008, para 6.3 pg.50)

Between 2001 and 2006, about 31% of new dwellings constructed were flats and maisonettes, whilst 69% were houses or bungalows. This meant that by 2006, flats and maisonettes represented about 17% of total housing stock (Annual Monitoring Report, 2007, p. 23.) Thus, while the rate of flat building has increased, houses continue to be the predominant building type in Colchester. The perception that flat building is more common is likely to reflect the fact that their construction is concentrated on the central areas of East Colchester and the town centre, while house building is occurring in less visible outlying areas.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment, undertaken by Colchester in conjunction with Braintree and Chelmsford Councils, provides evidence on the nature of the local housing market and the extent of housing need and is a key element of the evidence required to inform policy. In line with PPS3, its primary focus is on issues arising from price, tenure and households with particular needs. In its analysis of the needs of newly forming households, it points to a particular role for flats as a source of less expensive housing. The SHMA notes that 36% of newly forming households would 'like' to move into a flat, while 58.3% of them 'expect' to move into one. (SHMA, p. 143) Buying or renting a flat accordingly represent for many people a pragmatic lower cost alternative to initially accessing the housing market, with the aspiration remaining to move into a house at some later stage. Smaller flats can address the housing needs of single and small households, both young and old. The SHMA notes that while only around 10% of all households currently live in the private rented sector, 'around 40% of all moves involved the private rented sector- households moving into it, out of it or within it – showing how important the sector is in providing mobility in the housing market.' (SHMA, p. 91)

4.4 Scope for Policy Intervention

The Core Strategy provides for a minimum provision of at least 17,100 homes between 2001 and 2021 in accordance with the East of England Plan. A large majority of these homes have already been accounted for by previous Local Plan allocations, housing completions and planning permissions. For the relatively limited number of new allocations that will be required, the Core Strategy seeks to 'secure a range of housing types and tenures on developments across the Borough' (Policy H3). Table H3a provides an indication of how this is to be achieved, with flats concentrated in higher density town centre areas and houses in outlying areas. A mix of types, however, will be expected in most areas, so that some houses will be provided for families in town centres and some flats will be provided in outlying areas, in particular the two greenfield allocations in North Colchester (2200 units) and Stanway (800 units). The detailed mix of housing types for these areas will be specified in masterplans.

Given the overall predominance of houses in Colchester as noted above, the issue of an oversupply of flats is arguably specific to parts of East Colchester. While flats predominate as a housing type in the town centre, the overall character of the town centre is mixed. The issue for East Colchester is that the masterplanning process and the delivery of infrastructure has lagged behind the delivery of new high density housing. Key to the long-term sustainability of East Colchester will be the delivery of infrastructure, including the scheduled improvements to Hythe Station, delivery of the East Transit Corridor, provision of community facilities, and improvements to the public realm. Design quality has been a concern in the area, and planning policy can provide the backing to ensure more rigorous attention to sustainable construction methods, integration with the surrounding area, design, and quality of materials. A further issue unique to East Colchester is flooding. Some development may be precluded altogether, while other development will need to be carefully designed to meet standards for use and safe access.

East Colchester and Ipswich waterfront share many of the same problems— both are areas which have witnessed large levels of flat building to achieve regeneration and which are now dealing with oversupplies of flats and the need for creative ways to address flooding issues and improve design quality.

Ipswich is currently at the Preferred Options stage of developing a Core Strategy and Area Action Plan for the central area. It has proposed the following detailed policies for high density developments, and there is scope for Colchester to propose similar policies, either in the Development Policies DPD (Preferred Options consultation scheduled for January) or in a Supplementary Planning Document.

- The provision of adequate private balcony or roof terrace space in all flats (possible minimum size to be recommended) which avoids overlooking as far as possible, and/or access to high quality communal but private outdoor space that does not face north;
- The provision of adequate storage within the buildings sufficient for at least one cycle and two stacking storage crates per flat;
- The highest possible standard of sound proofing between flats and laying out internal space to minimise potential noise conflicts;
- The avoidance of excessive overshadowing between blocks and by blocks over neighbouring land uses, and of other adverse microclimatic effects resulting from medium and high rise buildings at a high density;
- Daylight to all habitable rooms and no single aspect north-facing homes;
- A management and maintenance plan to be prepared and implemented to ensure the future maintenance of the building and external spaces;
- Flexibility in the internal layout of flats to allow adaptability to different lifestyles;
- A minimum floor area for apartments (English Partnerships are considering introducing 51m sq for a one bed flat and 77 sq m for a two bed flat on sites they own);
 - An accessible bin storage area; and
 - At least some internal communal space.

5. Strategic Plan References

- 5.1 Housing supply issues are critical to the Strategic Plan goal of developing as a prestigious regional centre.

6. Consultation

6.1 Consultation on housing supply issues are undertaken through the Strategic Housing Market Partnership and at a more general level through consultation on the Local Development Framework.

7. Publicity Considerations

7.1 No publicity issues are raised.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 No financial implications.

9. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications

9.1 No equality, diversity or human rights implications.

10. Community Safety Implications

10.1 No community safety implications.

11. Health and Safety Implications

11.1 No health and safety implications.

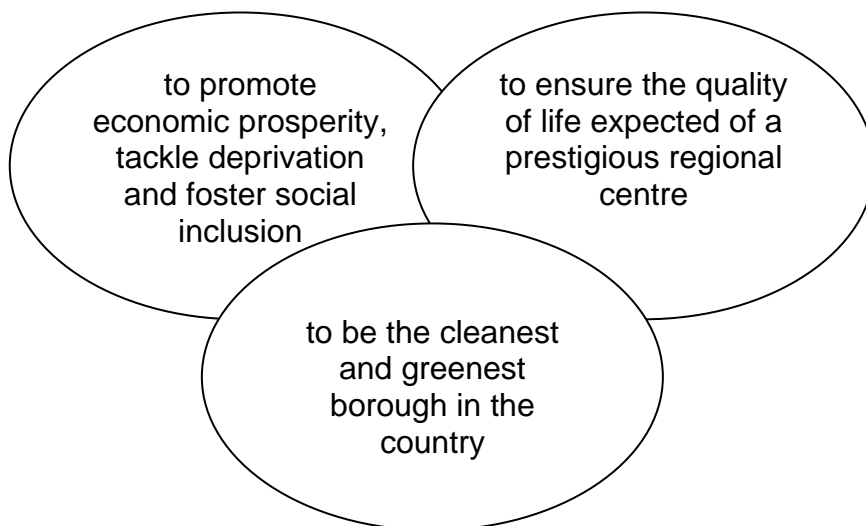
12. Risk Management Implications

12.1 No risk management implications.

Our vision is for Colchester to develop as a prestigious regional centre

Our goal is to be a high performing Council

Our corporate objectives for 2006-2009 are:



e-mail: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk
website: www.colchester.gov.uk