

EIGHT ASH GREEN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

EIGHT ASH GREEN PRE-SUBMISSION NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (v26) 2017 -2033

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The front cover of the pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan (v26) sets out the Vision for our village quite succinctly, reflecting the fact that we live in a lovely open village in a peaceful, rural setting on the outskirts of Colchester. We enjoy a good quality of life here with all the benefits of both an ancient Heath and having a safe neighbourhood. Whilst we may appreciate living close to what is rapidly becoming a very large town with all its assets, nevertheless, we do not wish to simply become a suburb of either Colchester itself or what is becoming the ever expanding satellite settlement of Stanway.

However, we recognise that our village cannot stand still and we need to play our part in the continuing expansion of Colchester. At the first public meeting of the village to consider the proposal to develop a Neighbourhood Plan, which took place on 22nd April 2015, it was agreed that we need to accept some additional housing in our village and as a result, the Neighbourhood Plan Group has been working closely with Colchester Borough Council to help determine how many houses should be built and where they should be located.

From the emergent Colchester Borough Council Local Plan, we know that Eight Ash Green is planned to grow by 150 dwellings. Having a Neighbourhood Plan, has helped us to determine the future development site in the village (and the new Settlement Boundary – *see Section 10*) and as a result of consultations with the residents of the village, the work of the Neighbourhood Plan Group and in conjunction with the Parish Council, we now know the chosen location – a single site known as Site 226 at the western end of the village (*see Annex F*). Site 226 will accommodate the entirety of the planned growth in the village within the plan period of 2017 to 2033. (*Section 8 of the Plan describes the overall consultation process and Section 9 sets out how we arrived at our present position*).

This Neighbourhood Plan is designed to help us achieve our Vision by laying out a clear set of broad **Objectives** and detailed **Policies** (*see Section 11*) that provide a framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made. It covers a wide ranging set of issues which are about promoting and supporting a vibrant and sustainable community or neighbourhood. This includes businesses as a Neighbourhood Plan is not just about housing - it is about the effective use of land which includes businesses. (*See Section 5 – “What does the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan do?”*)

As part of this work, we have identified a number of linked Projects (*see Section 12*) that fall outside the remit of the planning system. That said, we feel these should be specifically identified and recorded for future action while recognising that they will need to be taken forward outside the Neighbourhood Plan process. Taken together, the **Objectives and Policies** and the linked Projects are designed to inform residents and other stakeholders how the community seeks to move forward and develop in the wider sense, ie not just in terms of building new homes.

The key points to bear in mind in our Neighbourhood Plan (*see also Section 7*) may be summarised as follows:-

- They are about the effective use of land for the future:
 - in respect of domestic housing where, over the period 2017 – 2033:-
 - there will be the addition of 150 dwellings developed on a single Strategic Site located at Site 226;

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- the chosen Site should cater for a variety of different family types to include young people wishing to get on the housing ladder as well as “downsizers” who wish to move to a smaller property but remain living in the village
- in respect of businesses, the Moat Farm complex will become a “Designated Business Site” with the aim of encouraging new small businesses to the site and thereby increasing the potential for additional local employment.
- Strategically speaking, Eight Ash Green will largely remain as it is, a truly rural village with a good mixture of types of housing interspersed with open countryside both within and external to the settlement.
- It will continue to be a sustainable community close to but not part of or coalesce with either Stanway or Colchester or the prospective settlement of the West Tey Garden Community/New Town.
- Protection will continue to be afforded to the many areas of important habitat for wildlife and public enjoyment/recreation.

In all other aspects, the intention is to ensure the village will continue as it has since the inception of the Parish in 1947, ie a small attractive, distinctive, peaceful settlement nestled in the beautiful Essex countryside with its own identity and character.

Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan Group

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

February 2018