



ALDHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of Aldham Parish Council Extra Ordinary meeting held on Tuesday 5 th . August 2025 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall at Aldham	Action
<p>Present: Cllrs Mike Lambert (Chair), Brenda Brown, Andrew D'Angibau, Tony Gearey, Jean Jennings, Adam Scott, Roger Walker, CCC Sara Naylor, CCC Dennis Willetts, Andrew Triolo Eight Ash Green PC and Kevin B. Money (Parish Clerk). There were also present 18 members of the public.</p> <p>131/2025 Apologies for Absence None given</p> <p>132/2025 Declaration of Members interests To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary, Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary interest relating to items on the agenda. None Declared</p> <p>133/2025 Public Open Forum (Maximum 25 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This application will hugely impact on the landscape and the infrastructure• The Clerk at Fordham has been contacted regarding this application but no reply as yet.• The ditch behind Church Grove is totally overgrown• Eight Ash Green Parish Council has had a joint meeting with APC and CCC. Eight Ash Green PC(EAGPC) has had a consultation with residents and the residents agreed not to go with the CCC's original preferred site, but favoured the current application site. However, now the boundary becomes an issue because of the difficulty of incorporating land in Aldham Parish into the EAGPC Neighbourhood Plan. EAGPC are now considering two alternative sites on corner of A1124 and Halstead Road beyond the hotel roundabout and south of Halstead Road on A1124 between Esso PFS and Bullbanks Farm. The application at Foxes Corner is one of the largest being considered by CCC. This site could rise to over 400 houses, together with Aspen Walk with limited infrastructure. EAGPC is not supporting this application. EAGPC is happy to work with Aldham Parish Council.• Can a separation be kept between Eight Ash Green and Aldham as exists between Eight Ash Green and Stanway. <p>134/2025 Planning – including any Current Planning Applications requiring a response 251310 - Land off Foxes Corner Halstead Road Aldham Colchester CO6 3PP Outline application for the erection of up to 250 residential dwellings, public open space and associated works. Approval is sought for the principal means of vehicular access arrangements from Halstead Road. Internal access and all other matters are reserved.</p> <p>Cllr Tony Gearey proposed responding to CCC objecting to this planning application. Cllr Andrew D'Angibau seconded. All Agreed The agreed planning response is below</p> <p>Aldham Parish Council OBJECTS to the above application and urges Colchester City Council to refuse the application for the following reasons: The application is contrary to the Adopted Local Plan for Colchester, would cause harm to interests of acknowledged importance, does not amount to sustainable development and no material considerations have been put forward that would justify an exception to the policy considerations or outweigh the harm caused.</p> <p>In reaching this view the Parish Council has taken into account the following considerations:</p> <p>The site lies in open countryside outside any area designated for development and the application is therefore contrary to the Adopted Local Plan for Colchester. The applicant is relying on two issues to argue in favour of allowing development on the site now. The first is that the site was identified in the Preferred Options for the Local Plan Review that were tabled at the Council meeting in February and again in June, and secondly, that the Council is unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of Housing Land as required under Government Guidance. On the former, as yet the Preferred Options have not been approved by the Local Plan Committee for Consultation and as such should carry no weight in the decision-making process. Even if the Plan had been approved for consultation it would be at such</p>	

an early stage that it would be deemed premature to grant permission. On the latter we are assured by the City Council that currently they can demonstrate a five-year housing land supply.

Notwithstanding the officers' report recommending the inclusion of the site in the Preferred Options under the Local Plan Review the development would cause harm to interests of acknowledged importance that would not be mitigated in the way suggested in the documents supporting the planning application. These can be summarised as follows:

Imbalance & Coalescence

The extension of Eight Ash Green along the north side of Halstead Road into Aldham Parish as proposed would create a form of ribbon development that would stretch 1.27 miles along the northside of the A1124, creating coalescence with the outlying parts of the much smaller village of Aldham and doubling the number of houses in our Parish. Together with the adjoining development at Aspen Walk, 250 houses on this site would effectively form a separate community that would be remote from the centre of the village, creating an imbalance to the built form of Eight Ash Green. In the view of Aldham and Eight Ash Green Parish Councils, if it is found necessary to accommodate further housing development at Eight Ash Green as part of the Local Plan Review, there are better and more appropriate sites than this that could be brought forward through an update to the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan

Landscape Impact

The development of this site overlooking the Colne Valley, a Valued Landscape, to the north, would create an intrusive urban form into views across and out of this important local landscape feature, including from PRow and Fordham on the other side of the valley. The Landscape Impact Analysis recognises this impact as 'Moderate' across a distance of 850m but the impact of the built form is much greater and mitigation is limited and the photographic evidence does not accurately convey the impact. Attention is drawn to two recent Appeal Decisions which are relevant to this application. The first, at Colchester Road Bures Hamlet (APP/Z1510/W/18/3207509), where the Inspector gave significant weight to the adverse impact on a Valued Landscape, stating:

'Neither, having regard to Paragraph 127 [of the NPPF] do I consider that the exhortation to protect and enhance 'valued' landscapes is necessarily limited to landscapes that have either a statutory designation or a local designation in the development plan.'

The second, at Southminster, Maldon (APP/X1545/W/24/3351697) where the Inspector concluded:

'that even taking account of the indicative landscape and development framework plan,.....the identified adverse impacts to the character of the host landscape and the harmful visual effects from various perspectives would very substantially harm the character and appearance of the area. Therefore, the development would be contrary to Policies....in the Local Plan where these...seek to ensure that developments respect and enhance the character and local context and make a positive contribution in terms of landscape setting, and where it seeks to maintain the rural character of the district without compromising the identity of its individual settlements.'

In both cases these landscape considerations outweighed any shortfall in housing land supply.

Ecology

Fiddlers Wood, a Local Wildlife Site and Ancient Woodland, adjoins the site along the northern boundary and the cumulative impact of development of the adjoining site is not assessed in the Ecology Report and there is no survey analysis of what flora and fauna exist in Fiddlers Wood or how that might be affected by the development. The Ecology is limited to an analysis of the agricultural field and adjoining hedgerows which will inevitably have little interest apart from some mature oak trees. Mitigation in the form of a 30m buffer is an inadequate response, given the lack of evidence as to what needs to be protected.

Traffic & Transport

Whilst the application relies on the inclusion of the site in the Preferred Options Report to justify a permission, the Transport Assessment (TA) fails to include and assess the impact of the other sites along the A1124 that are proposed in that Report, namely 180 dwellings on land elsewhere in Eight Ash Green and 235 at Chappel & Wakes Colne. This development will adversely impact the village of Aldham, as drivers avoid congestion at the A1124/A12 junction by using Green Lane/Brook Road/North Lane to reach Marks Tey station and A12 southbound. Furthermore, given congestion on

the A120 at Marks Tey the proposed allocation of 125 dwellings at Gt Tey would further impact on the A1124 and also the village of Aldham as drivers seek to avoid using the A120 to access Colchester. No further development in the villages west of Colchester should be granted until the cumulative impact of the 3600 new dwellings proposed in the Preferred Options have been adequately assessed and a plan for mitigation agreed.

The TA and the Travel Plan overstate the existing bus services along the A1124 and proposes no improvement to frequency. The level of traffic and narrow carriageway through parts of Eight Ash Green make cycling unattractive on the A1124. The Travel Plan is wholly unrealistic in suggesting a reduction of 5-10% in Single Occupancy Car Journeys is a reasonable target and no practical measures are proposed to achieve any significant reduction in what will inevitably be a heavily car dependent development.

Design & Layout

The applicant is a land promoter, not a developer, and all matters of detail apart from the access will be subject to separate applications by whichever housebuilder purchases the site, if outline permission is granted. There is no design code and no indicative master plan that addresses the sensitivity of the site and the evidence of the development of the adjoining housing site is that there will be little distinctiveness to reflect the rural character of this location, resulting in further harm.

Following the resolution to object to the application Cllr A. Scott spoke about possibly getting s106 monies from this application in the event it was to be granted in the future. Cllr M. Lambert informed the meeting further on an email he has received from CCC s106 officer to highlight what, if any, s106 monies could be used for. Any comments made on this would be without prejudice to the Council's opposition to the current application

Reference was made to a list prepared in May 2023 (summarised below). Given at that time the village was not identified for new housing in the current Local Plan the Parish Council assumed that only small-scale infill was ever likely, and therefore the only s106 infrastructure eligible under the City Council' Supplementary Planning Guidance would have been only for Community Facilities and Sport & Recreation. This needs to be reviewed at the September meeting.

Community Facilities/Sport & Recreation: The priority is for the replacement of the playing fields and play equipment when the current lease expires in June 2024. At present no suitable alternative site has been identified, but the options for the future are under review by the Parish and funding would be required for purchase/lease of a new site and potentially replacement and/or additional play equipment. No costings can be given at this stage but a budget in the order of £30,000 is suggested.

The Village Hall is managed by an independent Committee, but it is understood that a porch over the rear door is needed. Estimated cost [£2500?] – NB this item has now been subject of s106 agreement and has been implemented

Replacement of two Parish Notice Boards - £3,000

Preparation of Ecological Management Plan for Gallows Green - £2500 – under discussion with EWT

Highways & Transport: The village is affected by traffic using local roads for rat running, particularly to avoid holdups on eastbound A120 at Marks Tey. Volume and speed of traffic on Brook Road/North Lane has increased, especially following the completion of the new bridge, and Brook Road is too narrow for larger vehicles to pass safely north of the bridge. This makes the route dangerous for walkers and cyclists. The Parish Council would seek funding for a feasibility study - £5-£10,000 to examine the potential for extending and improving the existing PRoW from Aldham Hall to North Lane to create a safe pedestrian/cycle route between the village and Marks Tey Station, bus services and other facilities. A safer route could also assist in reducing the need for residents to travel by car to reach these facilities.

Repairs to footway on Ford St Bridge - £10,000

PRoW repairs to signs, bridges etc reported in January 2021 - £3000

Safety Equipment for Community Speed Watch team £650

251158 - 2 Oak Tree Cottages Brook Road Aldham CO6 3RJ

8.45m x 3.91m Wood Garden Building

Aldham Parish Council responded to this planning application to CCC before the deadline.

The response was Aldham Parish Council has no objection to this planning application

251289 - Corvettes New Road Aldham CO6 3QZ

Replacement of existing stable building

Aldham Parish Council responded to this planning application to CCC before the deadline.

The response was Aldham Parish Council has no objection to this planning application

251407 - Somerson House New Road Aldham CO6 3PN

Demolition of existing outbuildings (part renewal of approval ref 222690 dated 19 Dec 2022)

Aldham Parish Council responded to this planning application to CCC before the deadline.

The response was Aldham Parish Council has no objection to this planning application

135/2025 Planning Decisions affecting Aldham

250944 - Frogs Hall Cottage Green Lane Aldham CO6 3PR

To determine if prior approval is required for a proposed: Change of Use of former Agricultural Buildings to Dwellinghouses (Class C3), which include necessary operations reasonably for the conversion The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) - Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q. **Prior Approval Required (Approved)**

251117 - Ashington Lodge New Road Aldham Colchester CO6 3QT

Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed change of use of agricultural storage building into two dwellings. **Prior Approval Required (Refused)**

136/2025 Finance

a) To receive the Bank reconciliations as at 31st. July 2025

Councillors noted the Bank reconciliations as at 31st. July 2025

b) To receive the comparison of Actual to Budgeted for 2025/2026

Councillors noted the comparison of Actual to Budgeted for 2025/2026

c) To approve the payment of Accounts for August 2025 and to agree a transfer of funds to meet the Parish Council financial requirements **All Agreed**

137/2025 To confirm date and time of next meeting. Tuesday 2nd. September 2025 at 7.30pm

138/2025 Closure of the Meeting

To close the meeting having considered and determined all items of business

The Chair then closed the meeting at 8.20pm and thanked everyone for attending

Signed

MLambert

Mike Lambert – Chair

2nd. September 2025