



WEST BERGHOLT PARISH COUNCIL

Local Plan Development Proposals – Consultation Review Session

Date: 15th December 2025

Start time: 20.00

Finish Time: 21.30

West Bergholt Planning & Development Committee: Cllr's Bob Tyrell, Brian Butcher, Andrew Savage, Paul Chamberlain, Veronique Tyler, David Pye and Colchester City Councillor Sara Naylor

Residents: Approximately 25 residents attended.

Chair of West Bergholt Parish Council welcomed West Bergholt residents to the meeting.

The first resident to speak said that until his wife saw our West Bergholt Parish Council posters around the village advertising the WBPC Planning Meeting and Consultation Review Session about the Local Plan and proposed sites, he knew nothing about it and felt Colchester City Council (CCC) had not advertised it sufficiently. He lives in Albany Road in West Bergholt and was concerned to hear that there was a proposed site off Albany Road (*Policy PP44: Land off Colchester Road, West Bergholt*), especially as the site in question had been refused planning before, and refused on appeal several times before, he couldn't understand why this site had been put forward again. He was also saddened to know that despite the efforts of the West Bergholt Parish Council and the work put in to create a Neighbourhood Plan, this proposed site goes against the plan.

Cllr Butcher said that WBPC arranged this meeting to gain insight and views from residents to assist the WBPC response, but that how the Local Plan has been advertised is up to Colchester City Council. He also stated that the shortness of time given to respond has been of concern. In response to the proposals, we will ask for bungalows or 2 floor houses.

Cllr Savage stated that Colchester City Council Planning is asking for responses from residents. And he encouraged them to respond. The site in Albany Road could initiate coalescence between West Bergholt and Braiswick, whereas CCC Planning have refused previous applications and stated that they want to prevent coalescence. So, the more people that put in their responses with good reasoning, and evidence we may have success.

Cllr Chamberlain addressed the confusion as to why this site was put forward again, and said it was a result of the recent "Call for Sites" where landowners submit their plots of land for consideration, and as a result of the Government pushing for more homes to be built, it has been considered again. And the number of houses required has increased.

Cllr Savage commented that when the WB Neighbourhood Plan was drafted, we asked residents their views and a large response was that residents did not want coalescence with Braiswick.

The next resident stated her concern about an already approved plan to build houses off Armoury Road. Access was not given for lorries to go to the site via Armoury Road; however the



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groundworks have started, and the lorries are driving down Armoury Road, which is not wide enough and damage and mess have incurred. The lorries can't turn around, and lorries are queuing to get in and out via Armoury Road. West Bergholt is a village, and the roads are not wide enough or built for this amount and weight of traffic. Essex County Council approved this access because Armoury Road is part of the "Essex Way".

The next resident that lives close to the proposed development near White Hart lane (*Policy PP42: Land at White Hart Lane, West Bergholt*), said an attempt has been made to open up White Hart Lane to traffic, which would cause chaos. **Cllr Chamberlain** said we can't guarantee anything, but we could highlight this when the application is put forward and would state that access should be via Colchester Road.

Cllr Butcher said once again we ask that you all respond, and we have printed forms available if you do not want to respond online. At this point **Cllr Savage** highlighted the do's and don'ts on responding to adhere to.

Cllr Savage discussed infrastructure and said that the certain restraints could be put in place such as limiting occupancy until infrastructure has been put in place, and that the developer submits money into infrastructure as well.

Cllr Butcher stated that money should be spent on the local doctor's surgery, and Heathlands school, and take into consideration biodiversity net gain.

Cllr Butcher then introduced **Colchester City Cllr Sara Naylor** who was asked to speak and advise residents on Colchester Hospital in her capacity as Governor on the Colchester Hospital Trust Committee. She said the CCC Councillors have been asked to give a view on the process, and Government has been told there is no choice, but that CCC are to build 21,000 houses in the Colchester area over the next 15 years. Regarding Colchester Hospital, there should be an overflow of beds that are empty and kept that way for emergencies and accidents, and unplanned care. These beds are no longer empty, the hospital runs at an estimated 125% capacity, so all beds are full and the extra 25% is "Corridor Care". Right now, Colchester Hospital needs another 90 beds. More people need care now, more than ever before. A business case was put forward to Government for money to fund this, and there has been no response. Government has said that a lack of hospital beds should not be a barrier against building more homes. Lack of, or new roads, should not be a barrier against building homes. This is a ludicrous situation. At this point City Cllr Sara Naylor said she would like to thank West Bergholt Parish Council for all they do. She said they do so much work on behalf of the Community that they are "on our side", they are trying to make the best of a bad choice with their hands tied. It is vitally important to look into this and make your points when you respond. If the houses are not built in West Bergholt they will be built elsewhere in Colchester and will still impact healthcare, schools and roads impacted with traffic. This situation we are discussing tonight is being discussed everywhere in the Colchester area and Parishes. Ward Councillors have been fighting on your behalf, and I am grateful that we have such a dedicated Parish Council in West Bergholt.

Cllr Butcher quoted the guidance on responses and said we will submit multiple documents and photos as evidence, traffic surveys, housing needs survey, housing density report, plus



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much more. We have also asked the school and the doctor's surgery to let us know what their current capacity is. The deadline is 14th January 2026, along with other Parishes we asked for an extension which was refused.

Another resident then asked what Anglian Water have said. **Cllr Butcher** said that Anglian Water have stated that none of the villages can take the extra capacity without the additional capacity leaking into rivers and waterways as a result.

Cllr Tyrell said that if we don't accept any of the sites, the Council won't be able to meet their needs and then we may have lots of other individual sites pop up, as the Council will have to do another "Call For Sites".

Another resident said that people who don't live near open space, will think it won't affect them, but of course it will affect them, the schools and doctors and healthcare will be full and roads will get worse.

Cllr Butcher said we have been advertising the Local Plan on our social media and website to reach out to all residents.

Another resident mentioned the site behind Garthwood Close, earmarked for Hopkins Homes and his concern that his garden will be overlooked completely by houses. He was also concerned about the piece of land as a designated sports area and was worried about cars and parking. **Cllr Butcher** said the land in question is the Parish Councils and it has allocated parking for 55 vehicles, and the land will not be opened until the parking is in place.

A resident queried the access to the Albany Road site, stating that Albany Road is not a suitable road for access. **Cllr Butcher** said that access via Albany Road has never been proposed. And access should be via Colchester Road.

A resident asked if the Parish Council response will be accessible before the deadline. **Cllr Butcher** explained that the PC response will be done over coming days, then put to the full council at an Emergency Meeting on 7th January to seek Councillors agreement to our response, and after that the Planning Committee would seek permission to amend if necessary. So, response is unlikely to be accessible before. If the PC agree the response on 7th January, we will submit it and put it on the website if possible.

Cllr Savage said that depending on the format of certain information it may be difficult to put it in its entirety on the website.

Cllr Butcher asked City Cllr Sara Naylor where we could find evidence of the lack of beds at Colchester Hospital, and she said she will try and find this information and email it to the Clerks Assistant.

In response to a resident **Cllr Butcher** reiterated that the PC has asked for capacity information from the school, and how many are from outside the village, and that we have also asked for supporting information from the doctors Surgery. **Cllr Stone** said that there is a high percentage of children from outside the village.

Another resident asked if the Parish Council have calculated, based on all the houses being built, what the cost of corresponding infrastructure would cost. **Cllr Chamberlain** said we can't



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quantify this but once we get responses back from the School and the Doctors, we may be able to estimate this. **City Cllr Sara Naylor** said that when the Local Plan is identified consideration will be given only to additional housing and does not address the current deficit, so no money is identified for this.

The meeting closed at 21.30