

Regulation 18 Local Plan

Employment Site Allocation – Supporting Statement

POLICY PEP9 Bullbanks Farm, Eight Ash Green

January 2026

1. Introduction

1.1 This Statement is submitted in support of the allocation of land at Bullbanks Farm, Eight Ash Green for employment development within the emerging Colchester City Council Local Plan under Regulation 18. It is prepared by Rockbrook Limited, owners of the land.

1.2 The site extends to approximately 0.8 hectares and is promoted for employment-generating development, suitable for Use Class E(g) and or B2, B8, in accordance with the Council's economic growth objectives.

1.3 This document demonstrates that the site is:

- Available within the plan period
 - Suitable for employment development
 - Achievable and deliverable
 - Consistent with national policy and Colchester's emerging spatial and economic strategy
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2. Suitability, Available and Achievable

2.1 The site is available in single ownership with no known barriers to development.

2.2 The is suitable as follows;

- Directly located off the A1124 within close proximity to the main centres of Tollgate and the A12 interchange. The A1124 also provides a key link to settlements west of Colchester leading to Halstead.
- Located opposite to recently constructed Aspen Walk and proposed housing growth for 250 homes (Policy Reference PP31) making it compatible with the surrounding area.
- The majority of the adjoining buildings at Bullbanks Farm already have planning permission for commercial use, making the proposal further compatible with the surrounding area.
- Located close to new infrastructure John Flower Avenue through Aspen Walk, the new link road providing access to Fiddlers Hill through to Fordham, approximately 200 metres east of the Site.

- Sustainable location with the A1124 already having pedestrian footway and public rights of way also in very close proximity.
- The site is not subject to overriding flood risk constraints, nor is it covered by statutory landscape or ecological designations.
- The site is accessible by public transport on the A1124.

2.3 The site is achievable and deliverable as follows;

- It is of a manageable scale and free from abnormal development costs.
- Regularly shaped flat site with no constraints across the land.

3. Proposed Allocation and Use

3.1 The Allocation is supported. The site would complement Colchester's existing employment portfolio, which is characterised by a mix of larger strategic sites and smaller urban employment areas.

3.2. We comment on the specific Policy wording below.

a) Safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity between the site and existing footways and to maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area;

3.3 The site is well served by existing infrastructure including a footway to the north of Halstead Road providing links to the housing development immediately north and Eight Ash Green Village to the east. Two public rights of way are also in very close proximity providing links to the wider footpath network.

b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;

3.4 Bullbanks Farm is already served by existing entrances which have been used for many years for uses associated with the Farm for regular movements of HGVs, vans and cars including retail trade of Christmas Trees, direct sale of farm produce and pick your own pumpkin patches. The uses have high volume traffic flow to the Site through these seasonal periods, which the highway network has demonstrated it can cope with.

c) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes two Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA.

3.5 We would recommend removing the final sentence of this element of the Policy. The Council's Stage 1 HIA does not list or identify the heritage assets considered to affect the emerging allocations, neither does it provide any commentary or justification for what effects the proposed development may have on the Listed Buildings. The inclusion of the first sentence ensures a heritage assessment is undertaken to support any application. There is therefore no need for the second sentence unless there is a

particular heritage asset or potential heritage impact of concern, of which none are within visible view of the site.

3.6 The closest heritage assets to the site are already well screened by existing development, woodland and mature vegetation and the subject site is not considered to contribute to the heritage significance of these assets.

3.7 The PP32 draft allocated land opposite is currently subject to a planning application for 250 houses and there are no outstanding heritage concerns or queries from statutory consultees.

4. Planning Policy Context

4.1 National Planning Policy

4.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires Councils to identify a future supply of land for employment uses over the Local Plan period. This land is suitable, available and achievable for economic uses and will contribute to the employment supply.

The allocation accords with the NPPF by:

- Supporting a strong, responsive and competitive economy
- Ensuring a sufficient supply of employment land
- Providing flexibility to respond to changing economic circumstances

4.2 Colchester Local Plan Context

4.2.1 Colchester City Council's emerging Local Plan seeks to:

- Support sustainable economic growth
- Strengthen Colchester's role as a key economic centre in North Essex
- Ensure an adequate supply of well-located employment land

4.2.2 The allocation of this site would assist the Council in meeting its employment land requirement, particularly by:

- Providing a deliverable, non-strategic employment site
- Supporting economic growth in Eight Ash Green and west of Colchester.

- Offering flexibility to meet market demand.
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5. Economic Need and Justification

5.1 Colchester's economic evidence base identifies ongoing demand for:

- General Employment land
- Smaller and mid-sized sites capable of supporting local business growth

5.2 The site's scale (0.8 ha) is well suited to:

- Efficient development and early delivery
- Occupation by local and regional firms
- Addressing gaps in the existing employment land supply

5.3 Allocation of the site would:

- Support job creation within Colchester
 - Reduce out-commuting
 - Strengthen the local economy
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6. Conclusion

6.1 The allocation of land at Bullbanks Farm, Eight Ash Green for employment use represents a sound and sustainable option for inclusion in Colchester City Council's Regulation 18 Local Plan.

6.2 The site is:

- Suitable, available, and achievable
- Consistent with national policy and Colchester's economic objectives
- Capable of delivering employment opportunities within the plan period

6.3 Colchester City Council is therefore encouraged to allocate the site for employment use in the emerging Local Plan.