



**REPORT of
DIRECTOR OF PLACE, PLANNING AND GROWTH**

to
DISTRICT PLANNING COMMITTEE
16 OCTOBER 2025

MEMBERS' UPDATE

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5

Application Number	22/00314/OUTM
Location	Land South of Fambridge Road, Burnham Road, and East West of Station Road, Althorne
Proposal	Outline planning application with all matters reserved except for access, for a phased mixed use development including: Up to 550 dwellings (Class C3) including affordable housing; Up to 1,000sqm commercial space (Use Class E); Early years facility (Use Class E(f)); Education provision (Use Class F1(a)); A 16ha District Park; A 3.3ha Local Park ; Allotments Access enhancements and associated development.
Applicant	Mr Ian Holloway – DMJ Althorne
Agent	Ms Bethan Haynes - Lichfields
Target Decision Date	21.10.2025 (Extension of time agreed)
Case Officer	Fiona Bradley
Parish	ALTHORNE
Reason for Referral to the Committee / Council	Major Development of Strategic Interest Departure from the Local Plan Environmental Impact Assessment

5 MAIN CONSIDERATIONS (PAGES 18 – 47)

5.12 Nature Conservation and Biodiversity

5.12.10 This paragraph (on page 42 of the agenda) states that the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) was being undertaken. This has now been completed by the Council's Ecology consultant and is summarised below:

Summary of recreational disturbance mitigation package

Test 1: Likely Significant Effect:

The development is for up to 550 dwellings within the 22km Zone of Influence (Zoi) of the Essex Coast RAMS in terms of increased recreational disturbance to coastal European designated sites (Habitats sites) in particular the Blackwater Estuary (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 4) SPA and Ramsar site, Crouch and Roach Estuaries (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 3) SPA and Ramsar site, Dengie (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 1) SPA and Ramsar site, Essex Estuaries SAC and Foulness (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 5) SPA and Ramsar site. Within

these ZOI, residents of new housing are considered likely to regularly visit relevant designated sites for recreation.

The application is considered to be “relevant development” in the context of the RAMS and so requires further consideration through the Appropriate Assessment stage to secure any mitigation measures necessary to avoid adverse effects on site integrity.

Test 2: the integrity test:

The developer has confirmed and agreed that the following will be incorporated within the development, as set out within the submitted Habitats Regulations Assessment (BWB Consulting Ltd, May 2025):

- High-quality, informal, semi-natural areas for recreational purposes within the proposed green infrastructure design. This includes a district park of 16.1 hectares in extent.
- The new 550 dwellings will generate 1320 new residents (based on 2.4 people/dwelling) and 165 dogs (based on Kennel Club figures for 30% households owning a dog). As the development will be implemented in phases, the ‘Additional Plan – Ecological Mitigation’ (drawing number SR-MZ-WATB-02) shows how recreational opportunities can be provided for each phase of development. This includes a walking route of 2.33km, with further walking opportunities throughout the development.
- Recreational opportunities shall be promoted by way of an information board on site for the high-quality greenspace to be provided as shown on the submitted and connections to the local public rights of way network. To secure the management and maintenance of these provisions, the developer will produce a long term management plan (either as a condition of consent or via a S106 agreement) and has committed to including signage within the open space and leaflets for new residents to promote the open space and nearby PRow for recreation purposes.

This mitigation aims to avoid impacts from the development alone.

- The proposal to erect 550 dwellings will trigger a proportionate financial contribution towards offsite visitor management measures for the Habitats Sites, in line with the Essex Coast RAMS Strategy (Tariff for 2025/26 is £169.45 per dwelling) for delivery prior to occupation.

This mitigation aims to avoid impacts from the development in combination with other plans and projects.

A legal agreement pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 has not been completed. Accordingly, reason for refusal 3 (bullet point 5) in Section 8 of the committee report includes reference to the necessary mitigation.