



**MINUTES of
DISTRICT PLANNING COMMITTEE
16 OCTOBER 2025**

PRESENT

Chairperson	Councillor M E Thompson
Vice-Chairperson	Councillor V J Bell
Councillors	M G Bassenger, D O Bown, J R Burrell-Cook, S J Burwood, S Dodsley, J Driver, A Fittock, A S Fluker, A M Lay, S J N Morgan, M G Neall, R G Pratt, U G C Siddall-Norman, N D Spenceley, P L Spenceley, W Stamp, CC, E L Stephens, N J Swindle and L L Wiffen

310. CHAIRPERSON'S NOTICES

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and went through some general housekeeping arrangements for the meeting.

311. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M F L Durham CC, L J Haywood, J C Hughes, K Jennings, W J Laybourn, R H Siddall, J C Stilts and S White.

312. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Chairperson referred Members to the supplementary pack circulated earlier that day, which included the Minutes of the last meeting.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the District Planning Committee held on 3 September 2025 be approved and confirmed.

313. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

There were none.

314. 22/00314/OUTM - LAND SOUTH OF FAMBRIDGE ROAD, BURNHAM ROAD, AND EAST WEST OF STATION ROAD, ALTHORNE

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

It was noted from the Members' Update that the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) had been undertaken by the Council's Ecology consultant and was summarised in the Update.

Following the Officers' recommendation Mr Singh an objector, Councillor Burgess (speaking on behalf of Althorne Parish Council), and Ms Haynes the Agent addressed the Committee.

Councillor M G Bassenger, a Ward Member, expressed concern regarding the proposed development, commenting on the character of the surrounding area, access to the site, the unsustainability of Althorne village, and the lack of facilities within the small village. He then proposed that the Officers recommendation of refusal be agreed. This was duly seconded.

During the debate that followed, Members discussed the application, with a number of concerns being raised regarding the proposal. In particular the:

- proposed introduction of a large scale residential development outside of the Althorne settlement boundary. It was noted that Althorne was a small village with limited facilities, employment and services.
- location of the site and access to public transport, the site would be reliant on use of cars.
- adjacent highway, including vehicle speeds along the road and related accidents.

In response to questions, including a reason for refusal relating to sustainability, the Development Management Team Manager advised that should Members be mindful to refuse the application an additional reason for refusal could be added relating to the sustainability and scale of the development. She explained that if agreed the Committee would need to nominate a Member to work with officers should the decision be appealed. At this point, Councillor W Stamp nominated Councillors Bassenger A Fittock and herself.

In light of the earlier discussions, the Chairperson proposed that the Committee agree the additional reason for refusal to the Committee. This was duly seconded. The Officer clarified that the reason would be drafted and agreed in consultation with the Chairperson of the Committee and Councillor Stamp.

Following further discussion, the Chairperson moved the Officers' recommendation of refusal with the additional reason for refusal relating to sustainability and the scale of the development. Upon a vote being taken this was duly agreed.

RESOLVED that this application be **REFUSED** subject to the following reasons:

1. The proposed development is beyond a settlement boundary where development plan policies seek to protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. The site comprises a valued landscape with a high sensitivity to change. The resultant effect of the proposed development on the character of the landscape would be substantial and adverse. The adverse impacts of the development in terms of landscape and visual impact would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Local Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies S1, S8 and D1 of the approved Maldon District Local Development Plan and guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. The Council's strategic policies seek to focus growth in the District's main settlements of Maldon, Heybridge and Burnham on-Crouch as they constitute the most suitable and accessible locations in the District. The proposal would introduce large scale residential development beyond the settlement boundary of Althorne, identified as a 'smaller village' in Policy S8 which provides limited services, facilities and employment opportunities, where the principle of the proposed development is not supported. The site is not well located in terms of access to and provision of public transport, access roads are constrained and narrow, and there is not sufficient infrastructure to support the scale of development proposed. The majority of journeys to and from the site would be reliant on travel by private car. Accordingly, the proposal would result in unsustainable development. The proposal conflicts with the development plan's spatial framework contrary to Policies S1, S2, S8, I1, and T1 of the approved Maldon District Local Development Plan and guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework.
3. The application includes insufficient ecological information to assess the impact of the proposed development on European Protected Species (Great Crested Newt). The proposal is contrary to Policies S1, D1, N1 and N2 of the approved Maldon District Local Development Plan and guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework.
4. In the absence of a completed legal agreement pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 the proposal fails to:
 - include adequate provision to secure the delivery of affordable housing to meet the identified need in the locality, address the Council's strategic objectives on affordable housing, and supporting a mixed and balanced community, contrary to Policies S1, H1 and I1 of the approved Maldon District Local Development Plan and guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework;
 - secure the necessary contribution towards healthcare provision, such that the impact of the development cannot be mitigated, contrary to

Policies S1 and I1 of the approved Maldon District Local Development Plan and guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework;

- secure the necessary contributions towards education provision, such that the impact of the development cannot be mitigated, contrary to Policies S1 and I1 of the approved Maldon District Local Development Plan and guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework;
- secure the necessary transport improvements such that the impact of the development cannot be mitigated, such that the impact of the development cannot be mitigated, contrary to Policies T1, T2 and I1 of the approved Maldon District Local Development Plan and guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework;
- secure the necessary financial contribution towards Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy or an appropriate mitigation strategy to overcome the impacts of the development on the European designated nature conservation sites, and the development would thereby have an adverse impact on those European designated nature conservation sites, contrary to Policies S1, D1, N1, N2 and I1 of the approved Maldon District Local Development Plan, the Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance Mitigation Strategy Supplementary Planning Document, and guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- secure the necessary contribution towards green infrastructure and sports provision, such that the impact of the development cannot be mitigated, contrary to Policies S1 and I1 of the approved Maldon District Local Development Plan and guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework.

315. 25/00666/FUL - BLACKWATER LEISURE CENTRE, PARK DRIVE, MALDON, ESSEX CM9 5UR

Application Number	25/00666/FUL
Location	Blackwater Leisure Centre, Park Drive, Maldon, Essex CM9 5UR
Proposal	Internal alterations and new glazed openings to south elevation serving proposed fitness suite; Installation of photovoltaic panels to southern, eastern and western roof slopes of main building.
Applicant	Mr Martin Anderson - Places For People Leisure Management Ltd
Agent	Mr Edward Rawle - Pozzoni
Target Decision Date	30.09.2025
Case Officer	Matt Bailey
Parish	MALDON TOWN
Reason for Referral to the Committee	Referred by the Assistant Director: Planning and Implementation under Part 3, 1d of the District Planning Committee Terms of Reference due to matters of strategic importance and interest to the District. Site is also in Council Ownership and must be determined by a Committee.

Following the Officers' presentation a discussion ensued. Councillor V J Bell commented on the application and proposed that it be approved as per Officers' recommendation. This proposal was duly seconded.

Councillor J Driver declared an interest in this application as he, along with his wife, used the gym at the leisure centre on a regular basis.

A debate ensued. There was some discussion regarding the proposed glazed openings and it was clarified that they would be made from transparent glass to create a view in and out of the gym space. In response to queries regarding whether two-way or alternative glazing could be requested, Members were advised that this could be conditioned if they were mindful. The Head of Development Management and Building Control explained that from a planning perspective the opening was the main matter for consideration, as there was no impact on the community a decision to change any glazing wouldn't be considered material.

The Senior Planning Officer explained that the internal alterations could be carried out without planning permission and had been included for completeness, this also applied to the photovoltaic panels.

In response to reference to the Leisure Contract, the Director of Legal and Governance advised that this was not a planning issue and therefore not relevant or for discussion in relation to this application.

Councillor E L Stephens felt that the glazing should not be two-way glass and proposed an amendment to the proposal that an additional condition regarding the glazing be included. This proposal was duly seconded.

Councillor A S Fluker spoke regarding the glazing and whether Places Leisure should be given opportunity to review this and come back to the Committee. He proposed that the application be deferred to allow Places Leisure to consider the comments regarding the glazing and come back to the Committee. This proposal was duly seconded. The Chairperson put this to the Committee however the deferral was not agreed.

The Chairperson then moved the proposal in the name of Councillor Stephens to include a condition regarding the glazing. Following further debate, a vote was taken and the Chairperson declared that the motion was lost.

The Chairperson then referred to the proposal in the name of Councillor Bell, to accept the Officers' recommendation of approval, and put this to the Committee. Upon a vote being taken this was duly agreed.

RESOLVED that this application be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans stated on the Decision Notice.
3. The materials used in the construction of the development hereby approved shall be as set out within the application form / approved plans.

Councillor A S Fluker left the meeting during this item of business and did not return.

There being no other items of business the Chairperson closed the meeting at 9.23 pm.

M E THOMPSON
CHAIRPERSON