

Formal Representation – Ardleigh Parish Council

Regulation 19 Consultation: Tendring District Local Plan Review (2026–2043) With Policy References (Ardleigh Neighbourhood Plan + Local Plan Review)

1. Introduction

Ardleigh Parish Council submits this representation in response to the Regulation 19 consultation on the Tendring District Local Plan Review (2026–2043). Ardleigh has an adopted Neighbourhood Plan (2023), which forms part of the statutory development plan and must be given full weight in decision-making.

This representation is submitted in a constructive spirit. Ardleigh Parish Council supports planned, sustainable growth in appropriate strategic locations, including the Tendring–Colchester Borders Garden Community, and seeks modifications to ensure that Ardleigh’s adopted Neighbourhood Plan is fully recognised and that cumulative local impacts are properly assessed and mitigated.

In conjunction with this submission, the Council also directs TDC to previous relevant submission, in particular the regulation 18 response submitted in March 2026 and its comments submitted at part of the planning application for the Colchester Borders Garden Community in May 2026.

2. Shared Policy Objectives

2.1 Settlement Hierarchy & Scale of Growth

Ardleigh Neighbourhood Plan Policies

- **ANP Policy SP1 – Settlement Identity & Rural Character** Protects Ardleigh’s rural identity and limits development to small-scale, proportionate growth.
- **ANP Policy H1 – Scale of Housing Growth** Supports only infill and small sites that respect village character.
- **Presumes against development outside the existing settlement boundary**

Local Plan Review Policies

- **Strategic Policy SPL1 – Managing Growth** Requires Tendring to accommodate unprecedented levels of housing growth.
- **Strategic Policy SPL2 – Settlement Development Boundaries** Redefines settlement boundaries across the district.
- **Strategic Policy SAMU1 – Tendring–Colchester Borders Garden Community** Introduces a major new settlement immediately adjacent to Ardleigh.

Ardleigh Parish Council accepts the Tendring–Colchester Borders Garden Community as the strategic location for major planned growth and recognises that concentrating

growth there can help protect smaller rural settlements from inappropriate expansion. To make this approach sound for Ardleigh, the Local Plan should recognise the cumulative effects arising from the Garden Community alongside National Grid infrastructure, North Falls and Five Estuaries offshore wind connections, Tarchon, Surya, mineral extraction, large industrial developments in the Old Ipswich Road area, waste management operations, associated land loss and biodiversity impacts. The council feels strongly that the piecemeal nature of the various consultations and applications currently targeting construction in Ardleigh Parish means that the collective impacts of the schemes in totality has not been properly considered.

2.2 Landscape, Rural Character & Green Gaps

Ardleigh Neighbourhood Plan Policies

- **ANP Policy LC1 – Landscape Protection**
- **ANP Policy LC2 – Settlement Separation** Protects green buffers between Ardleigh, Colchester, and surrounding hamlets.

Local Plan Review Policies

- **Strategic Policy PPL3 – The Rural Landscape**
- **Strategic Policy PPL6 – Strategic Green Gaps**

Ardleigh is currently has ~10% of its land area currently built upon, with a significant further area covered by surface water at Ardleigh reservoir, Salary Brook and various ponds including the irrigation lake for Peake Fruit and the recreations Ifishing lake and George Hall. In totality, the already proposed industrial and energy schemes proposed for Ardleigh would more than double the built upon area.

The Council believes that such development challenges the rural essence of the Parish, and could lead to its essential character being irrevocably lost.

Ardleigh therefore strongly advocates for the Local Plan's aim of protecting rural landscape and settlement separation. The Parish Council asks that these protections are strengthened around Ardleigh so that the Garden Community, energy infrastructure, minerals and waste activity, and wider development pressures do not gradually compress green gaps or erode landscape character. Of particular concern here is the potential development of the Crockleford settlement withing the Colchester Borders Garden Community, which threatens to significantly erode the green gap to the south of the village centre.

In addition, the Council would like the plan to consider that Grade 1 farmland comprises almost 40% of the land area of Ardleigh. This scarce and valuable resource must be offered the utmost protection in order to preserve both the security that derives

from its high value fruit and vegetable production, and also the socio-economic impact on livelihoods of long established farming families and the >200 jobs supported by agricultural land use in the Parish

2.3 Transport, Traffic & Road Safety

Ardleigh Neighbourhood Plan Policies

- **ANP Policy T1 – Traffic & Road Safety**
- **ANP Policy T2 – HGV Management**

Local Plan Review Policies

- **Strategic Policy CP1 – Sustainable Transport & Active Travel**
- **Strategic Policy CP2 – Improving & Maintaining the Transport Network**
- **Strategic Policy SAE2 – Freeport East & A120 Corridor** (major HGV generator)

The Local Plan anticipates significant traffic increases from:

- Garden Community growth (SAMU1)
- Freeport East expansion (SAE2)
- Minerals & waste operations (see below)

These pressures should be assessed together so that traffic, HGV movements and road safety impacts are understood at parish level and appropriate mitigation is secured before or alongside development.

Consideration should also be made in respect of predicted major infrastructure projects in Ardleigh. In particular, haul roads for the major schemes are not considered as part of the plan. Cumulatively all these schemes have the ability to overwhelm Ardleigh's limited and narrow road network.

The Council believes strongly that assumptions applied regarding public transport use, active travel and the volume and destination of external journeys are deeply flawed and not matched by reality on the ground. This, in particular an increase in journeys toward Ipswich is likely to place further pressure on the already stressed Manningtree underpass and in Ardleigh to lead to increased use of local roads to either bypass busier roads or travel more directly. It is important that infrastructure development, including the structural improvement of the Manningtree underpass and building of the A120/A133 link road take place ahead of further development.

2.4 Infrastructure Capacity

Ardleigh Neighbourhood Plan Policies

- **ANP Policy INF1 – Infrastructure-Led Growth**

- **ANP Policy INF2 – Drainage & Utilities Capacity**

Local Plan Review Policies

- **Strategic Policy DI1 – Infrastructure Delivery & Impact Mitigation**
- **Strategic Policy LP1 – Housing Supply (18,173 homes)**

Ardleigh welcomes the principle of infrastructure-led growth. The Local Plan should, however, explain how local infrastructure capacity in and around Ardleigh will be protected, given that it is already under pressure in many ways. Further indirect pressure can only arise from strategic growth, major construction programmes, minerals and waste activity, and associated workforce and vehicle movements.

Local concern is already elevated regarding provision of Primary care and GP services in Ardleigh, with the GP surgery operating above capacity, with associated access and parking issues.

2.5 Minerals & Waste Safeguarding

Ardleigh Neighbourhood Plan Policies

- **ANP Policy ENV3 – Protection from Industrialisation**
- **ANP Policy ENV4 – Noise, Dust & HGV Impacts**

Local Plan Review Policies

- **Essex Minerals Local Plan – Policy S8 (Minerals Safeguarding Areas)**
- **Essex & Southend Waste Local Plan – Slough Farm Allocation**
- **Martell’s Farm – Area of Search for Waste Facilities**

The Parish Council asks TDC to recognise how minerals and waste safeguarding around Ardleigh, including Slough Farm and Martell’s Farm, may combine with strategic growth and energy infrastructure to create cumulative HGV, noise, dust, landscape and biodiversity impacts.

2.6 Housing Type, Density & Design

Ardleigh Neighbourhood Plan Policies

- **ANP Policy H2 – Rural Design & Vernacular**
- **ANP Policy H3 – Low-Density Development**

Local Plan Review Policies

- **LP3 – Housing Density & Standards**
- **LP4 – Development Layout & Design**

- **LP5 – Affordable Housing**

Ardleigh Parish Council supports high-quality and sustainable design but asks that district-wide density and design policies are applied in a way that respects Ardleigh's rural character, low-density settlement pattern and locally distinctive vernacular.

3. Cumulative Effects Requiring Parish-Level Assessment

Ardleigh faces an unprecedented concentration of overlapping pressures from planned strategic growth, energy infrastructure, minerals and waste activity, large industrial development, transport impacts, land loss and biodiversity change. Ardleigh Parish Council asks that these pressures are assessed together, rather than project by project, so that their combined effects on rural character, green gaps, local roads, local services, tranquillity, agricultural land, habitats and biodiversity are properly understood.

Ardleigh faces a unique combination of pressures:

- Garden Community proximity (SAMU1)
- Minerals & waste safeguarding (Slough Farm, Martell's Farm)
- Strategic transport upgrades (CP1, CP2)
- Freeport East HGV movements (SAE2)
- Tarchon, Surya, National Grid, North Falls, Five Estuaries
- District-wide housing growth (LP1)
- Green gap compression (PPL6)

This request is intended to support a sound and deliverable Local Plan. It would allow TDC to demonstrate that the Garden Community and other strategic proposals can be accommodated while also protecting the adopted Ardleigh Neighbourhood Plan and the Parish's rural setting.

4. Requested Modifications to Strengthen Soundness

Ardleigh Parish Council requests the following modifications:

1. **Explicit recognition** of the Ardleigh Neighbourhood Plan within the Local Plan Review.
2. **Strengthening of Strategic Green Gaps (PPL6)** around Ardleigh.
3. **A cumulative impact assessment** covering traffic, HGVs, landscape, heritage, minerals/waste, and infrastructure.
4. **Policy safeguards** ensuring LP3/LP4 do not override ANP rural design policies.
5. **Infrastructure investment commitments** proportionate to the direct and indirect pressures on Ardleigh which already exist and are under strain even before much of the potential new development has been permissioned.
6. **Review of minerals/waste safeguarding boundaries** to ensure compatibility with ANP environmental objectives.

5. Conclusion

Ardleigh Parish Council supports sustainable, plan-led growth and accepts the Tendring–Colchester Borders Garden Community as the appropriate strategic location for major development. The Parish Council’s position is not one of opposition to growth, but a request for the Local Plan to recognise Ardleigh’s circumstances and to ensure that the adopted Ardleigh Neighbourhood Plan is given full and practical effect.

Ardleigh’s Neighbourhood Plan represents the democratically expressed vision of the community. With clear safeguards, a parish-level cumulative impact assessment, strengthened green gap and biodiversity protections, and infrastructure commitments proportionate to the combined pressures affecting Ardleigh, the Local Plan can deliver strategic growth while protecting the rural identity, landscape setting and community wellbeing that both the Local Plan and the Ardleigh Neighbourhood Plan seek to secure.