



A Coggeshall fit for families?

Coggeshall is a special place. It has lovely buildings and spaces but also a sense of community across generations. It thrives on and welcomes children and young families and supports its senior citizens.

The benefits of Coggeshall are not however limited to impressive historical buildings; it is surrounded by beautiful countryside with well-trodden footpaths and views. These assets are enjoyed by all age groups - from young mums and dads with babies in slings, toddlers with their first walking stick, young 'would be' ornithologists to the more mature residents taking a stroll alongside early morning walkers, runners and cyclists and, of course, dogs trailing their 'walkers'!

Is it at risk?

Many believe that Coggeshall is at risk and that the views of young families need to be better canvassed and heard when options and plans are considered and decisions made.

Young families come to Coggeshall for all the benefits it offers- not just the great physical environment but also for the community-based environment. This is a great place in which to raise children.

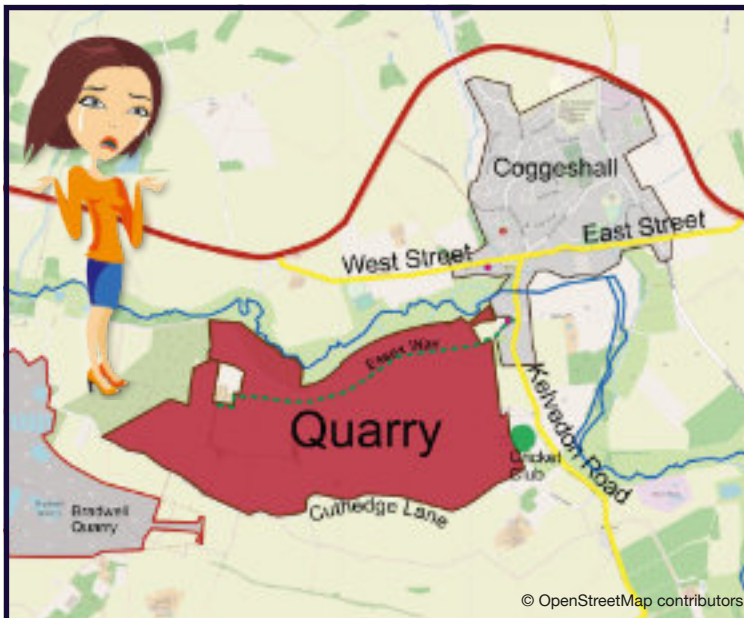
Coggeshall needs young families not simply to survive - but to thrive!

Plans

Coggeshall is next to the River Blackwater. In 2001 after very heavy rainfall the river level rose and nearby homes were flooded.

The Environment Agency looked at the chances of this happening again and concluded that the risks weren't high enough to get grants to protect the place from flooding. So nothing would be done.

Now, in 2019 the Environment Agency ('EA') plan to build a dam across the River Blackwater plus a water storage area - ostensibly to address issues of local flooding.



Concerns

What the EA did not make clear to Coggeshall residents was:

- that to implement this plan 13 m tonnes of sand and gravel would need to be removed from the River valley. Making a hole in the valley bigger than the village itself
- that this "hole" would be made by Blackwater Aggregates quarrying in the river valley
- that the hole would be 100 metres from homes on Grange Hill and Kelvedon Road and 2 Grade I listed buildings
- that the noise, the dust and the disruption would impact on the lives of families in Coggeshall for 20 years!

Just think...

a baby born in 2019 would have left school before the flood scheme is completed and would never have had the opportunity to run along the Essex way!



Some residents, perhaps especially those to the east of Coggeshall may think the proposed quarry will not affect them. However, the excavation would affect all of Coggeshall. The sound from the football and cricket pitches can be heard all across Coggeshall up to Honywood. So would the sound from the quarry - but for 6 days a week! The quarry would make Coggeshall less attractive to tourists and result in yet more shops and pubs/restaurants closing, and thus fewer local jobs. The EA say that this is what we said we wanted.

Information

1. Did you have enough information to make an informed decision about the proposal, the cause of past flooding, the degree of risk and types of potential future flooding in Coggeshall (e.g. surface water to other sources) to make an informed choice as to whether the plan and excavation is proportionate to risks?
2. Did you know about other options for flood defence? Would you have liked to know more to help you make an informed choice?
3. Are you happy with the degree of local consultation undertaken by the EA?
4. Are you satisfied the consultation documents were widely distributed, unbiased and transparent?
5. Did the EA ask the right questions to help young people, parents, grandparent and other residents to engage with the process in an informed manner?
6. Did it give you enough information to decide whether Coggeshall would remain a place where you would wish to raise children, enjoy the town, meet friends and walk the surrounding valley?



What next?

In late 2019 the EA and Blackwater Aggregates will be seeking planning permission for this scheme. A group of people opposed to the scheme have formed CRAQ. (Coggeshall Residents Against the Quarry).

Engage with CRAQ, tell us what you need to know and help us ensure your views are represented.

Make your views known via the CRAQ website: www.craq.org.uk, and Coggeshall Facebook - we want to hear what matters to you and your family about the physical environment.



We take the issue of flooding and the concerns of those affected seriously but we want an informed and transparent discussion and a proportionate response to the problem that will not harm the environment or change the 'face' of Coggeshall and the family friendly community of which we are so proud. We want to make sure that Coggeshall continues to be a place that attracts children and young families and enables them to thrive.

Leaflet produced by CRAQ - Coggeshall Residents Against the Quarry