

Community-Led Planning Thorndon

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Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils

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Welcome

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Setting the Scene

- There is growing pressure for additional housing development in the Babergh and Mid Suffolk area.
- Proposals have already been received for the development of sites in many of our villages.
- It may not be possible to say 'No' to future proposals but it might be possible to mould them to achieve local aims.
- There needs to be a realistic understanding of what might happen.

Setting the Scene

Why is there a need for additional housing development?

- Increasing life expectancy, smaller households and an under supply of housing are some of the factors contributing to the demand for additional homes.
- The lack of growth in some of our villages is placing the long-term sustainability of services in doubt.
- There is a risk that communities will become less vibrant.
- The phenomenon is not unique to Babergh and Mid Suffolk.
- Doing nothing is not a desirable option.

Setting the Scene

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) contains a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- It sets out a number of objectives, including commitments:
 - to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity,
 - a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures to meet the needs of different groups in the community, and
 - the conservation and enhancement of the natural and built environment.
- The NPPF seeks to empower local people to set out a positive vision for the future of their area. It encourages greater community involvement and engagement in the planning process.

Setting the Scene

- The Mid Suffolk Core Strategy, 2008 and Core Strategy Focused Review, 2012 provide the current planning policy framework.
- Both documents identify housing requirements whereas the focus of the NPPF is upon meeting housing needs and achieving sustainable development.
- Policy CS1 outlines a settlement hierarchy.
- Thorndon is a secondary village where additional development may take place on suitable sites around the village, subject to other policy criteria being satisfied.

Setting the Scene

How do you think you might want to respond to the need for additional development housing?

- respond to planning applications as they are submitted?
- have a wider discussion on the future direction of growth, knowing it could be challenging?
- conduct a parish survey including a housing needs survey?
- prepare a community-led planning document?
- produce a Neighbourhood Development Plan?
- look at other mechanisms?

The Options

Some possibilities

- Village Design Statement
- Parish Plan
- Community-Led Plan
- Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Neighbourhood Development Order
- Community Right to Build Order

In all cases the community needs to be actively involved with preparation.

The Options

Village Design Statements

- used to inform the design and appearance of new developments.
- based upon a visual analysis and appraisal.
- cannot be used to protect local services.
- help to guide the consideration of planning applications.
- limited weight can be attached to them for decision-making purposes.

The Options

Parish Plans

- used by communities to set out aims and aspirations for their village.
- can cover more than planning issues and take a ‘whole village’ approach.
- based upon objective data from various sources.
- help to guide the consideration of planning applications and tackle other issues.
- limited weight can be attached to them for decision-making purposes.

The Options

Community-Led Plans

- similar to parish plans but with a greater emphasis upon planning issues and what the community would like to see.
- require a proportionate evidence base plus other appraisals (e.g. census data, landscape assessment).
- help to guide the consideration of planning applications.
- limited weight can be attached to them for decision-making purposes.

The Options

Neighbourhood Development Plans

- used to decide where and what type of development takes place.
- must be about the use and development of land but can include parish projects.
- requires a robust evidence base to support policies and proposals.
- take 18 - 24 months to prepare.
- becomes part of the Development Plan framework.
- has weight once it is formally 'made' (adopted)
- is used for decision-making purposes.

The Options

Neighbourhood Development Orders

- allow communities to deliver small-scale, site specific development proposals without the need for a separate planning application (permission is granted by the order)
- can be used for rural exceptions housing or a community building, such as a village hall
- certain exclusions apply
- less time and resource intensive than a neighbourhood development plan but set processes must be followed
- if the Referendum is successful the District Council must 'make' the Order

The Options

Community Right to Build Orders

- similar to a Neighbourhood Development Order
- can be produced by a community organisation irrespective as to whether or not the area is covered by a town or parish council
- can also be used for small-scale proposals
- less time and resource intensive than a neighbourhood development plan but set processes must be followed
- if the Referendum is successful the District Council must 'make' the Order

Neighbourhood planning

Community Infrastructure Levy Implications

- Structured to encourage communities to prepare neighbourhood development plans or orders.
- Where CIL is in place:
 - Parish Councils entitled to 15% of receipts from developments in their area where there is no neighbourhood development plan or order.
 - Subject to a £100 cap per existing dwelling.
 - Parish Councils entitled to 25% from developments in their area where there is a neighbourhood development plan or order.
 - No cap.

Neighbourhood Planning

What is neighbourhood planning?

It is about a community using land and development to deliver somewhere to live, work, shop, eat, and drink. It is also about what it enjoys and cherishes and how it moves around.



Neighbourhood Planning

Neighbourhood Plans **CANNOT** be used to stop growth or promote less development than the Local Plan.



The **Basic Conditions** must also be met:

- Have appropriate regard to national policy,
- Be in general conformity with the strategic elements of the Local Plan,
- Contribute towards sustainable development,
- Be compatible with EU obligations.

Neighbourhood Planning

Seven stage process



1. Area designation
2. Preparation
3. Publicising the neighbourhood plan
4. Submission of the neighbourhood plan
5. Independent examination
6. Referendum
7. Plan Made (adopted)

Neighbourhood Planning

The District Council has a legal duty to support neighbourhood planning groups. It can:

- assist with community engagement work,
- provide technical data and maps, and
- advise on the content of the plan and whether it might pass examination.

The District Council must fund the examination and referendum.

Neighbourhood Planning

1. Area Designation

The Parish Council must submit:

- A plan and statement identifying the land in question. It could cover the administrative boundary, part of it, or include adjoining parishes.
- A statement as to why the land should be designated.
- A statement as to why the group can be regarded as a 'qualifying body'.

The District Council must publicise the application and invite comments over a four week period before making a decision.



Neighbourhood Planning

2. Preparing the Plan

- The Parish Council must lead the process.
- Ideally it should be overseen by a Steering Group.
- The Parish Council has formal power and responsibility for the preparation of the plan.
- It must involve and engage the community and liaise with other bodies, interest groups and landowners.



Neighbourhood Planning

How much Evidence is required and what form should it take?

- Will vary from plan to plan,
- No prescriptive checklist,
- Depends upon the aims and objectives of the neighbourhood plan,
- May, for example, focus upon socio-economic considerations or environmental issues,
- The evidence must be sufficient to demonstrate compliance with the Basic Conditions



Neighbourhood planning

What should a neighbourhood plan contain?

- It should have a clear vision,
- It may contain a single policy or tens of policies, and
- It may also include projects.

Whatever it contains:

- It must meet the 'Basic Conditions', and
- Be subject to wide and inclusive community engagement



Neighbourhood planning

3. Publicising the Plan

- The Parish Council publicise the draft plan to people who live, work or carry out business in the area.
- A minimum of six weeks must be given for comments.
- Statutory bodies must also be consulted as advised by the District Council.
- A draft is submitted to the District Council.

Neighbourhood planning

4. Submitting the Plan

- Plan/statement showing the area
- Title of the plan
- Basic Conditions Statement
- Consultation statement detailing:
 - Who was consulted;
 - How they were consulted;
 - A summary of the main issues and concerns;
 - How these issues have been addressed



Neighbourhood planning

5. Independent Examination

The Examiner will check the Plan to see if it:

- Meets the 'Basic Conditions'
- Conforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and Local Plan policies
- Contributes to sustainable development
- Complies with EU Obligations
- Requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment, and
- Is compatible with the Human Rights Act

Neighbourhood planning

The Examiners will recommend either:

- The plan is submitted for referendum;
- Modifications are made prior to referendum; or
- The plan is rejected.

Modifications can only include those needed to meet the 'Basic Conditions', EU convention rights, spelling and grammar.

If the Examiner recommends that significant changes are made the Parish Council may need to go back to the local community and consult again on the changes.



Neighbourhood planning



6. The Referendum

- Organised and funded by the District Council
- Underlines the importance of wide community support
- The Examiner can extend the scope of the referendum but only if proposal has wider effects beyond neighbourhood area
- Requires simple majority (+50%)

Neighbourhood planning

7. The Plan

- If the Referendum is successful the District Council must 'make' (adopt) the Plan.
- The plan once made will be used for decision-making purposes when planning applications are submitted.
- The plan will need to be reviewed periodically (usually every 5 years).

Neighbourhood planning



The Housing and Planning Act, 2016

The Secretary of State may intervene if an authority:

- fails to set a date to hold a referendum,
- goes against an Examiner's recommendations, and
- makes modifications to a plan that have not been recommended by the Examiner or are otherwise deemed unnecessary.

Who is preparing a plan?

Babergh	Mid Suffolk
East Bergholt	Debenham
Hadleigh	Elmswell
Hartest	Haughley
Lavenham	Mendlesham
Lawshall	Needham Market
	Stowupland
	Stradbroke
	Thurston
	Woolpit
Other approaches	
Chelmondiston	Eye

Summary

Key Points

- There is growing pressure for additional development.
- There is an opportunity for communities to mould and shape future proposals.
- There are a number of mechanisms available.
- These range from informal engagement activities to the formal neighbourhood development plan process.
- A parish survey could be a useful start.

The choice is yours!



Useful Information Sources

My Community

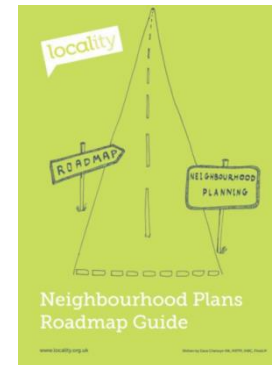
<http://mycommunity.org.uk/resources/neighbourhood-planning-roadmap/>

Planning Advisory Service

<http://www.pas.gov.uk/neighbourhood-planning>

Royal Town Planning Institute

<http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid/neighbourhood-planning/>



Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councils

<http://www.babergh.gov.uk/planning-and-building/community-led-planning/>

<http://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/planning-and-building/community-led-planning/>



Any questions ...

