Neighbourhood Plan - Identifying the Issues and Options

The Neighbourhood Plan Working Group will need to gather evidence of the factors that may affect the development of the Neighbourhood Plan to assist in the identification of options. For the purpose of gathering evidence the work has been divided into five work areas each led by a volunteer.

Housing	Nicky Crouch
Business and Employment	Ed Gibson
Community Facilities	Jamie Gilmour
Character/Environment	Andrew Garnham/TBA
Transport	Cedric Pettit

Each work area Team-leader is hoping to be supported by other volunteers from the parish of Great Barton. Anyone wishing to help a team leader should contact Sheila Deare, the Neighbourhood Planning Clerk in the first instance at gtbartonnp@gmail.com

Data

Many of the work areas will require data from the same sources and it will be important that the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group and the Executive Committee have access to the same set of up to date data. The Neighbourhood Planning Clerk will set up a data sharing IT system so that the data is held centrally and can be accessed by the Parish Council.

Resources

At this stage it is hoped that the data gathering exercise will not require any external consultancy support. However it may be necessary if for any reason the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group lost any of its volunteers.

The Parish Council has set a budget of £6224 up to September 2017 to cover the costs of room hire for meetings and consultation exercises, for the employment of a Neighbourhood Planning Clerk, stationery, printing and postage. Initial estimates at this stage are:

- Neighbourhood Planning Clerk - 4 hours per week
- Parish Council Clerk - 2 hours per week
- Room Hire - £10 per 2 hour meeting

Grants

The Parish Council may apply to the Department of Communities and Local Government for financial support for the Neighbourhood Plan. A Grant of £9000 is available to all groups. This can be drawn down in amounts varying from £1000 to £9000. Each amount must be spent within 6 months or before 31 March of the financial year, whichever is earlier. The funds cannot be used for retrospective work, the cost of staff or volunteer's time, except for specialist consultants and 4 is the maximum number of applications.

As the St Edmundsbury Local Plan includes more than 500 additional homes in the Parish this is a 'High Growth Area' and applications can be made for further funding of £6000 for technical support and are made in exactly the same way but this has to be approved by the Department of Communities and Local Government.

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The grant may be spent on such items as:

- Developing a website
- Creating a project plan
- Help developing the evidence base and analysing it to identify issues and aims of the plan
- Undertaking a housing survey
- Engaging a planning expert to help draft policies
- Venue hire
- Printing
- Publicity

Technical Support is a range of support packages offered by one of the department's expert consultants. They have wide experience supporting the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans offering such packages as:

- Housing Advice and Assessment
- Heritage and Character Assessment
- Environmental Impact Assessment
- Habitats Regulations Assessment
- Viability Proposals
- Evidence Base and Policy Reviews
- Technical Facilitation

Indicative Timescales

It is envisaged that Quantitative Research will take 6-8 weeks and will be mainly desk-top and telephone work. Qualitative Research will take 3-4 months and drafting and agreement of initial research findings report will be hopefully be completed by the end of November 2016.

The evidence required of each work area is set out on the following pages.

Housing

At the Parish Council Annual General Meeting residents of Great Barton identified that housing was a key issue that they would want to see covered in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Overall Objectives of the Housing Work-plan

- To determine the current provision of different types of housing in the Parish.
- To identify the future provision allowed for in the Local Plan.
- To identify the future needs and demands (if any).

Research Required - Quantitative

- Parish population data and age profiles
- Number, type and occupancy levels of dwellings
- Number and type of housing currently proposed at the Berkeley Homes site
- Number and type of housing currently proposed at the Triangle site.
- Planning Applications already granted and applications in process.
- Need and demand for further new homes eg affordable houses.
- Land within the Parish that could be made available for further housing.
- Proposed additional Housing in Neighbouring Parishes.

Potential sources of information

- Housing department at St Edmundsbury BC
- Review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment for possible alternative sites
- Review of St Edmundsbury BC Annual Monitoring Report for Housing
- Berkeley Homes Strategic Plan
- Suffolk County Council
- Landowners

Research Required - Qualitative

- Views on type of housing required in the future.
- Views on why people choose to live in the parish.
- Views on why people leave the Parish.

Potential sources of information

- Survey of residents to identify needs/aspirations
- Survey of former residents who have left the Parish

Business and Employment

Overall Objective of Business and Employment

- To determine the current provision of business and employment within the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Area
- To identify the needs and potential opportunities for future business and employment development within the NP area

Research Required - Quantitative

- List of current businesses including
    - Location
    - Industry sector (e.g. Agriculture, Retail etc.)
    - Number of employees
    - (if available and willing to contribute) some measure of their current business success, e.g. Turnover, Profit, Growth
    - Rationale for locating in the NP Area
    - Current local dependencies and infrastructure needs (e.g. local business partnerships, space / nature of operating base, broadband, access to road / transport network, utilities etc.)
- Local employment rate
- Employment types and numbers
- Population numbers, demographics and future projections

Potential sources of information

- Local research/ONS data
- East of England Forecasting Model
- 2011 census data
- Internet / phone book / directory
- St Edmundsbury BC data (e.g. for Business Rate determination or referenced in current Local Plan documents)
- Suffolk Observatory

Research Required - Qualitative

- Current and future barriers to business growth
- Current and future barriers to employment
- Views on current and future infrastructure needs
- Potential skills, training and development needs (e.g. local skills shortfalls or over-provision)

Potential sources of information

- Interviews with local business owners
- Interviews with local employers
- Interviews with sample of working age population
- Data referenced or already used within current Local Plan documents
- Public consultation / workshop / open sessions

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Community Facilities

Great Barton is fortunate in having a number of community groups which are essential for the well-being of the Village.

Objectives of Community Facilities Work-plan

- To determine the current provision of physical community facilities
- To determine the current provision of community activities within the Parish
- To determine the extent to which residents have to travel outside of the Parish to meet their needs
- To identify the future needs for community activities and facilities

Research Required - Quantitative

- Existing Community Infrastructure Facilities and level of use
- Community Services currently provided
- Location of services relative to customer base

Potential sources of information

- Village Hall Committee
- 3 Churches
- Individual Community Groups
- Survey of residents
- Berkeley Homes Strategic Plan
- Suffolk County Council
- St Edmundsbury Council
- NHS

Research Required - Qualitative

- Current and future needs of the Parish residents
- Views on how services would need to adapt to changes in circumstances

Potential sources of information

- Survey of residents within the Parish
- Survey of those providing services and activities
- Berkeley Homes Strategic Plan
- Suffolk County Council

Character and Environment

Objectives of Character and Environment Work-plan

- To record and determine the current environment (i.e air quality, noise, public open spaces, ecology etc) and character (built form – both historic and modern and landscape setting).
- To identify areas of conservation, local importance and those that although not currently protected should be considered for retention. Ensuring that new developments / buildings in the future do not harm the setting and are appropriate to the context of Great Barton and where appropriate use materials which are of the local vernacular.

Research Required - Quantitative

Environment
- Air Quality
- Noise pollution
- Arboriculture
- Archaeology
- Ecology
- Public Amenity (areas of public open spaces/ pedestrian movement)
- Light Pollution
- Public Safety/Crime prevention

Character
- Historic built form through to modern day development.
- Landscape setting.

Potential sources of information

- Suffolk County Council Highways Department
- Suffolk County Council Archaeology Unit
- West Suffolk Council Environmental Health
- West Suffolk Council Planning Department (current policy and past applications)
- West Suffolk Council Tree & Landscape Officer –Jackie Fisher
- Suffolk Police - Crime Prevention Architecture Liaison Officer

Research Required - Qualitative

Character
- Carry out character assessment of Great Barton village – taking photos and written recording.
- Crime prevention

Potential sources of information

- West Suffolk Council Planning Department.
- Great Barton History Society – Frank Holmes / Roger Curtis
- West Suffolk Council Conservation Officer - Conservation Areas / Listed Buildings.

Transport

The A143, a major road linking runs through the village of Great Barton separating the communities on either side of the road.

Overall Objectives of the Transport Work-plan

- To determine the current provision of transport infrastructure.
- To determine the use of the existing infrastructure.
- To identify the future provision anticipated for development allowed for in the Local Plan and agreed masterplan for Berkeley Homes Site.
- To identify the future needs to reflect changes in land use.

Research Required - Quantitative

- Capacity of existing network of roads, footpaths, bridleways
- Use of existing network of roads, footpaths, bridleways
- Current Public transport provision
- Traffic accident data.
- Car usage
- Public transport usage
- Predicted changes in traffic levels and public transport
- Parking provision
- Existing travel needs
- Environmental Impacts

Potential sources of information

- Department for Transport
- Highways England
- St Edmundsbury BC including West Suffolk Operational Hub data
- Berkeley Homes
- Suffolk County Council
- Great Barton Parish Council Vehicle Activated Sign Data
- Sustrans
- Bus Operators
- Taxi Operators
- 2011 Census
- Suffolk Constabulary
- Neighbouring Parishes Neighbourhood Plans

Research Required - Qualitative

- Reasons for choice of transport mode.
- Origin-destination surveys

Potential sources of information

- Survey of residents to identify transport needs/aspirations
- Survey of businesses' travel needs
- Survey of travel choices