

Barrowden Parish Council April 2017 Meeting

Report of the Neighbourhood Plan Group

Over the last month, the Neighbourhood Plan Group have been very active with

- 1 Considering the report from the External Consultant on the first draft of the Plan
- 2 Running a Consultation event in the Village Hall over the weekend of 17th/18th March
- 3 Circulating an Issues and Options questionnaire on three key topics to residents and analysing the results

The Consultant's Report

The Group were pleased with the report from the external consultant which provided a detailed analysis of the first draft of the Plan. Each section of the Plan was commented upon and specific advice was presented to the Group as how they might ensure that the Plan would meet the Basic Conditions requirement and areas where further evidence would be helpful to support the assertions within the Plan.

Resulting from the report additional work will be required to update the sections within the Plan and clarify the individual policies. Work will be carried out to incorporate the existing Barrowden Village Design Statement into a wider document covering Wakerley as well as Barrowden and the landscape of the Welland Valley and separate it from the Plan. This will provide a cleaner structure with defined policies and the revised combined Villages Design Statement and Landscape Assessment as part of the evidence.

The Group believe that there would be a benefit from using an external Consultant to finalise the wording of the Plan based on the draft policies and evidence. This would be funded through a grant from Locality. It is critical that the wording of policies in the final version of the Plan are clear and cannot be mis-interpreted by developers or RCC.

Consultation Event

About 70 residents attend the sessions which were run on the Friday evening and Saturday morning. It was disappointing however that the younger generations were noticeably missing from the attendance list and the Group considered this issue at their recent meeting, proposing a number of options to be investigated. The feedback from the post-it notes were combined with the results from the Issues and Options questionnaire. A separate Parish Meeting was held in Wakerley to consider their specific issues

Issues and Options Questionnaire

The Questionnaire was delivered in Barrowden and Wakerley covering three Issues

- Housing development to be Allocated on specific village sites or as a result of Windfall applications
- Extension of Conservation requirements in the heart of the village
- Important Open Spaces and Local Green Spaces.

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Barrowden received 59 feedback forms. An initial analysis suggests that on the first question - 23 were in favour of allocating and 42 were in favour of windfall. On the second question - 41 were in favour of a higher level of protection and 24 disagreed with the idea (the variance is explained by some villagers ticking both boxes). On the third issue as we did not ask a specific question but only invited comment, initial indications suggest 17 had no comment, 36 were generally supportive of the Open Spaces, and 6 against some elements of the proposed areas.

Wakerley had 10 people at the Parish Meeting and 6 forms were returned from those unable to attend. All indicated support for continuing without defined village development limits and to enlarge the conservation area. Less clear were views on enhancing the level of conservation area protection - where should we target and that should we wait until conservation area enlarged first. An approach will be made to East Northants DC seeking a Conservation Area Appraisal.