

## **Barrowden and Wakerley Neighbourhood Plan Report to the Barrowden Parish Council**

As previously reported March 2017 saw the successful review of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan by Mike Haybyrne and also achieved a clear indication of the Resident's Preferences during the Issues and Options Consultations.

At the April Business Meeting colleagues raised concerns that there was not a clear plan going forward and commented about the extent of work still required to reach the pre-submission phase of the Plan. Taking these points on board an informal meeting was planned for June 12th 2017 to allow everyone to express their views, clarify the situation, and explore a way forward to progress the project.

It was also noted how complicated the process had become compared to what had been seen in the early Neighbourhood Plan publications. Unfortunately, over the last seven years in which Neighbourhood Plans have been running, the amount of guidance and feedback from inspectors has demanded a much higher standard than that afforded to the front runner Neighbourhood Plan communities.

Some discussion centred around the amount of detail required for the planning policies and it was noted that Rutland County Council have stated that they will not take into account any of the words in commentary relating to a policy only the words in the policy itself. Therefore it is critical that these policies are very clear, very precise and not open to debate otherwise developers may be able to manipulate the policies to their benefit.

This makes the level of detail required in the plan for a small community like Barrowden and weekly almost the same as for a large town like Uppingham, (excepting the requirement to allocate housing)

Due to the delays which had occurred since the end of the Issues and Options Consultation, the Project Plan which was produced to obtain the funding for the Mike Haybyrne report will now not be achievable. An updated Project Plan is to be produced reflecting the outstanding work and evidence base collection required to reach the stage where the plan can be written up ready for pre-submission consultation.

It was generally agreed that utilising someone like Mike Haybyrne to write the pre-submission version of the plan would be extremely beneficial both in terms of the quality of the policies being produced and the workload on the Neighbourhood Plan Group.

Following a discussion as to whether there was a need to develop a Character and Landscape Assessment for both Barrowden and Wakerley, it is recognised that while the existing Draft Plan and Barrowden Village Design Statement provides an excellent base, there is a need to bring the VDS up to date and link that into Wakerley. In addition there is a need to consider the overall setting of the Welland Valley in terms of its landscape as part of the Conservation Policy. This is something that had already been recommended both by Colin Dunigan last year and Mike Haybyrne in his report.

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As a result of these discussions the following actions were agreed:-

- 1 A subgroup will be established to write the Character and Landscape Assessment for the two villages in the Welland Valley utilizing the guidance provided by locality and others. The group will be made up of Jean Mitchell, Trina Griffiths, Chris Barrett, Colin Dunigan and David Allan, with input on history and archaeology from Linda Worrall.
- 2 A subgroup consisting of John Merritt, Stephen Last and Gordon Brown will revise the Development Section of the Draft Plan based on the information received from Rutland County Council on Affordable Homes, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment covering Rutland, and the advice from Mike Haybyrne in his report on the first draft of the plan.
- 3 Work will also commence in preparing an Invitation to Tender for someone to write the pre-submission version of the plan and obtain funding from Locality. Richard Littlejohns and Gordon Brown will take on this task.
- 4 The Environment section of the Draft Plan will be revised to include the comments from Mike Haybyrne and also the SUDs style drainage wherever possible.
- 5 A revised version of the Project Plan will be prepared and circulated to members of the group by Gordon Brown at the next meeting.

The next meeting of the group will be held on Monday, 3 July at 7.30pm in the village hall

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### Post Meeting Note

Rutland County Council have produced a toolkit for Neighbourhood Plan Groups which can be found at <http://rutlandcounty.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s9123/Report No. 118-2017 Appendix 2.pdf> and also a schedule showing the timescales which Rutland County Council require as part of the making of a Neighbourhood Plan which is attached.