

Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan Parish Council Update

1. Purpose

This report provides a general update on progress with the Neighbourhood Plan for Diss and District and requests that the Parish Council provide feedback on key elements prior to consultation with the community.

2. Progress Update

With input from professionals, a comprehensive evidence base has been produced for the plan which has helped identify key issues for it to address. This includes a housing needs assessment, evidence of publicly available data such as from the Census and site assessment work. This sits alongside work already undertaken with the community.

All of the documents produced thus far are available on the Neighbourhood Plan website: www.ddnp.info

With the support of local residents, each parish has undertaken an appraisal to review walking and cycling links, important local green spaces, key views and historic assets.

Housing growth will be delivered within the Neighbourhood Plan area, primarily in and around Diss, which expects to see an additional 400 homes. Growth is also required in the South Norfolk villages of Scole, Roydon and Burston and Shimpling. To ensure maximum influence over this growth, in particular its location, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group would like to allocate sites for housing within the plan. The indicative housing requirement for the Mid-Suffolk villages is 0 (zero).

3. Walking and cycling network

The Neighbourhood Plan will identify the key walking and cycling network in Diss and District and direct priorities for improvement. The priorities will be considered when development comes forward and some may be delivered as part of housing schemes. In addition, there may be funding available locally to support the network's delivery.

The identification of the walking and cycling network has drawn on work undertaken by Norfolk County Council for their Diss Network Improvement Strategy. The working group have supplemented this with local knowledge and links from Diss into the neighbouring parishes.

The list below includes priority infrastructure that has been identified by the working group for Palgrave. Note that at present deliverability of schemes has not been considered.

- Extension to the Victoria Road cycle track to provide a safer and more attractive traffic free route from Palgrave to Diss

- Extension of the Waveney Riverside Path from Lowes Bridge to Denmark Green to enable Fair Green residents to gain access to the supermarkets and the town centre without using Park Road.

4. Local Green Spaces

The Neighbourhood Plan will designate some green areas that are especially important to the community as Local Green Spaces. These need to be particularly special as the blanket designation of all/most green areas is not appropriate and may cause the Neighbourhood Plan to fail at examination or be subject to future legal challenges. Areas designated as Local Green Space will receive protection from future development.

To be designated, green spaces need to meet a set of national criteria which requires them to be demonstrably special to the local community and not extensive tracts of land – ie not just open countryside. Examples of green areas that could be designated include playing fields, boating lakes, allotments, or community gardens. Green spaces which are highway land, such as verges, and linear paths like Public Rights of Way should not be designated.

The following 16 green areas have been identified as potential Local Green Spaces by the working group in Palgrave. These have been through an initial review by Collective Community Planning to consider whether they meet the criteria at first glance. Further work to determine that they hold particular local significance to the community, through consultation, will be undertaken prior to determining the final list. It is recommended that a smaller number than those put forward are ultimately designated as it should only be those special out of the ordinary spaces which are designated; the more spaces that the plan tries to designate, the less likely they will be considered as out of the ordinary during the examination or in a legal challenge. The Parish Council may wish to reduce the number now before public consultation to avoid raising public expectation.

Meets criteria

PAL1: The Green

PAL2: St Peter's Churchyard

PAL3: Waveney Valley Meadows

PAL5: Parish Cemetery

PAL10: Playing Fields

PAL11: Unitarian Graveyard

PAL12: Priory Woods

PAL14: Burlington Close Greenspace

Maybe meets criteria

PAL8: Village Meadows

PAL15: Goodrich Park

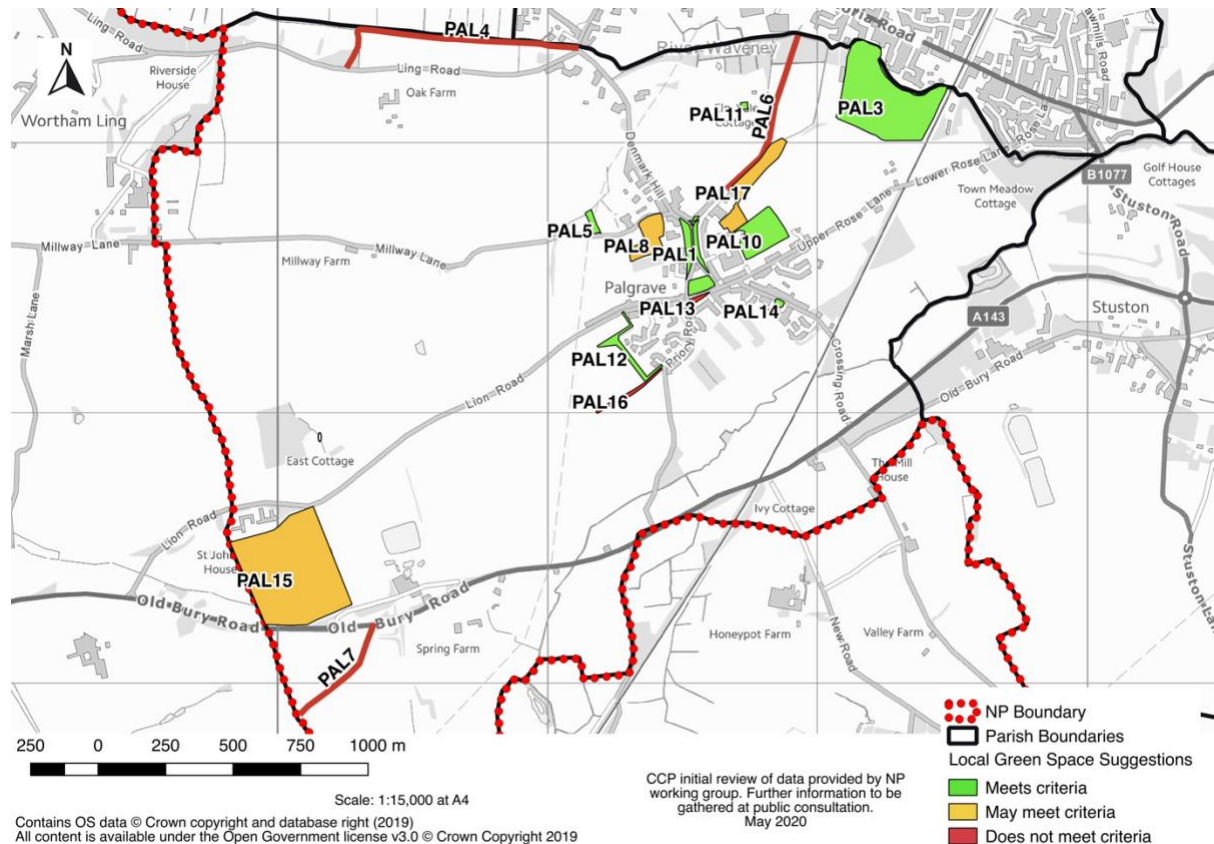
PAL17: Drake's Meadows

Does not meet criteria

PAL4: Permissive path – Waveney Riverside (linear corridor)

PAL6: Lows Lane (linear corridor)

- PAL7: Dam Lane (linear corridor)
- PAL13: Manorial Waste (Highway Land)
- PAL16: Job's Lane (linear corridor)



5. Key Views

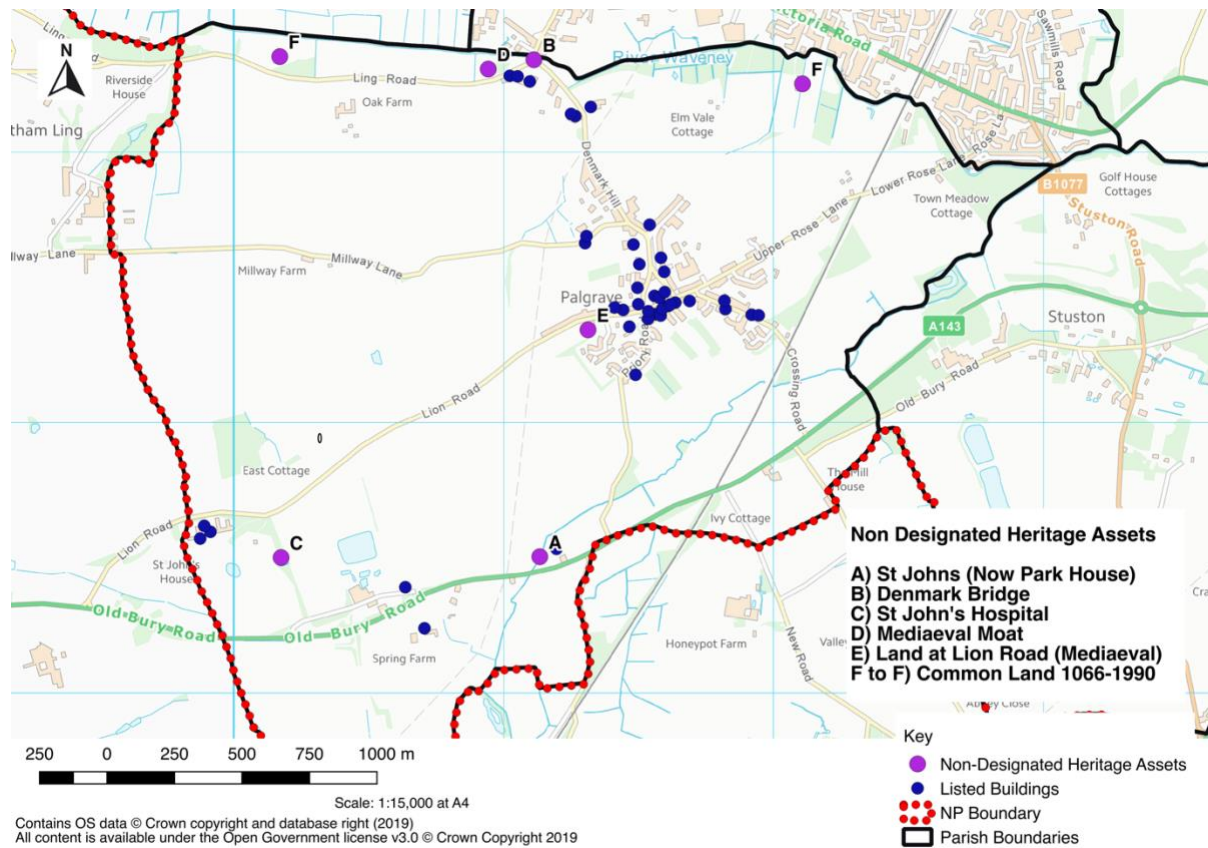
The Neighbourhood Plan will identify key views within Diss & District which depict the area’s special qualities. These may be of the landscape, iconic views of the village or historic features such as the church and its setting. The plan will seek to protect these views for future enjoyment.

Work is ongoing to identify key views in Palgrave. Residents will be asked to put forward ideas during the public consultation in July.

6. Heritage Assets

Protection already exists for land and buildings in Palgrave which are located in the Conservation Area or designated as listed buildings through national policy and guidance. The Neighbourhood Plan can add to this by identifying other buildings or structures of local historic importance, referring to them as non-designated heritage assets. The local Historic Environment Record has been used as a starting point to identifying any assets of historic significance that are not already designated in some way. Local knowledge has been used to supplement this.

The map below contains a list of the designated and non-designated heritage assets which have been identified by the Neighbourhood Plan group.



These buildings/sites will be included in the public consultation, with residents given the opportunity to add to or amend the list.

7. Site allocation

Allocating sites for housing within a Neighbourhood Plan can provide additional protection from speculative development happening, for up to 2 years after the plan is 'made'. The Neighbourhood Plan will allocate, with a growth strategy being developed, to provide additional housing in line with Local Plan requirements in Diss and the Norfolk villages

There is no additional requirement for growth in Palgrave as part of the emerging joint Mid-Suffolk Local Plan. This being the case, there is no need to allocate within the village for Palgrave Parish to be afforded the additional protection, as part of the wider neighbourhood plan, against speculative development. This is because the allocations made in the Neighbourhood Plan in Diss, Scale, Roydon and Burston/ Shimpling will be sufficient to meet the whole growth requirements of the plan area. Of course, the parish could still decide it would like to allocate for housing because this could provide for a local housing need. For example, an allocation could be a small site for social/ affordable housing. Furthermore, even a small allocation for open-market housing could deter speculative development simply as a consequence of some local need for such housing having been met by the allocation.

8. Next steps

Consultation with the public will be undertaken in July/August 2020. This will update residents on the Neighbourhood Plan and seek their views on the protection of assets identified within this report. As part of this there are plans to send a postcard to every resident.

Following the consultation the Neighbourhood Plan itself will be drafted. This will take the form of a single plan for the entire plan area with subsections for parish specific aspects. It is anticipated that this draft will be consulted on towards the end of 2020, early 2021.

9. Recommendation for the Parish Council

The Parish Council is requested to note the progress being made in developing the Diss and District Neighbourhood Plan, confirm approval not to allocate sites within Palgrave in the Neighbourhood Plan, unless Mid-Suffolk specifically identifies a growth target, and consider whether the list of Local Green Spaces should be shortened prior to consultation with the public. Overall feedback can be provided to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group via the Parish Council representative.

Report written on behalf of the Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
June 2020