

1. Community-Led Plan

This Plan is to represent the collective and evidenced views of the Community, but preparation and submission is the responsibility of the Parish Council, so it is essential that Councillors participate and be fully engaged in order to properly represent the views of the Community.

Palgrave has never had a Parish Plan or any other similar Plan prepared so has nothing to guide it. The primary purpose is to communicate to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) the issues affecting a community, allowing it express opinions and to set out its objectives and offer potential solutions to problems. If accepted by the LPA it should be taken into account when planning applications are being considered, but cannot over-ride a Neighbourhood Plan or Local Plan or national guidance and it cannot prevent growth.

The reason for preparing a Community-Led Plan at this time is to identify key issues and potential solutions, in order to inform the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan. At the same time it may help to deter inappropriate planning applications and inform the decision makers.

Three open forums/workshops have now taken place, with increasing numbers attending successive ones. The first introduced the planning processes and the place and purpose of the Community-Led Plan by particular reference to the various development sites put forward by landowners and the evolving Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan. Participants were invited to complete a questionnaire.

The second reviewed the content of the first and addressed two specific themes; the many issues concerning roads and traffic and the factors and conditions relevant to assessing development sites.

The third moved on to consider all the many other matters that could be included in a Community-Led Plan but concluded with the issues associated with the school and potential solutions.

The concluding agreement of those present was that, in the circumstances, the Plan addresses the proposed development sites, the options for the school and associated roads and traffic matters.

2. Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan

Following many month's discussions during which the final participating local councils and rules for collective working by the Steering Group were agreed and communities duly consulted, application for Designation of the Plan Area - encompassing Diss Town Council and Brome & Oakley, Burston & Shimpling, Palgrave, Roydon, Scole and Stuston Parishes - was submitted to South Norfolk and Mid Suffolk Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) by Diss Town Council, as Lead Council.

The consultation period on the application ended on 31st July and a decision by the LPAs is awaited.

During this waiting period the Steering Group invited two consultancies with relevant experience and local knowledge to present the ways in which they could assist by preparing a 'Plan to develop the Plan'. A selection has now been made and a recommendation put to an extraordinary meeting of Diss Town Council on Wednesday 9th August. If approved and subject to final details, this exercise will run from late August to early October and a document outlining a draft vision, emerging themes and work topics will be produced at a convenient point in the Draft Babergh/Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan consultation (see below).

Subject to satisfactory progress and the availability of additional funding, the potential exists to extend the consultancy engagement to include: gaining funding; seeking evidence and consulting on the vision, objectives and emerging topics/themes; drafting policies; submission of the Plan to the LPAs; Examination and Determination. The projected timescale would be for the last activity to occur during Summer/Autumn 2018 and so may coincide with submission of the Joint Local Plan.

3. Draft Babergh/Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan

Both Councils have approved the Draft for public consultation (under Regulation 18), which will run between mid-August and a date (to be confirmed) in October. The planned overall timetable is approximate but indicative key stages are:

- Draft Plan consultation Summer 2017
- Proposed Plan consultation Winter 2017-18
- Submission (of final version) Summer 2018
- Examination Winter 2018
- Formal Adoption (plan comes into effect) Spring 2019

The Draft comprises 3 principal sections and is supplemented by other documents providing the supporting evidence which may also be included in the public consultation. The contents include:

- Strategic
Key social, economic & environmental issues; vision & objectives in line with Joint Strategic Plan (Economy, Environment, Housing, Strong & Healthy Communities); matters requiring cooperation with other bodies including adjacent Local Planning Authorities (e.g. South Norfolk).
- Delivery
Housing Requirement; Settlement Hierarchy; Distribution of Growth; Housing Mix & Affordable Housing; Rural Growth and Development; Gypsies & Travellers; Houseboats; Economic Needs; Town Centres & Retail; Biodiversity; Climate Change; Landscape & Heritage; Healthy Communities; Infrastructure.
- Place
Functional Clusters; Settlement Boundaries and Site Allocations; Relationship of Joint Local Plan to Neighbourhood Plans; Identification of Land for Development using the Strategic Housing & Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA - see below).

A Sustainability Appraisal is also being made of each of the options identified.

Throughout the principal sections *Key Issues* are summarised in a peach-coloured box, *Options* in a blue-grey-coloured box and the *Consultation Questions* in a yellow-coloured box and these form the basis of the consultation and format of responses.

Strategic Housing & Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)

This document will be available separately and forms part of the consultation. It includes those sites brought forward under the two 'Call for Sites' [comprising in the first tranche sites greater than 2 hectares¹ (ha) and in the second tranche sites between 0.25 and 2 ha] considered to be technically suitable, available and achievable. There are some 300 sites at 198 settlements across both Districts.

There are more sites put forward than are required to meet the assessed housing demand and the final selection of sites will be informed through consultation, evidence and appraisals.

Form of Consultation

As explained above the principal sections of the Draft Joint Local Plan contain blocks describing *Key Issues*, *Options* and the associated *Consultation Questions*.

Previous consultations have made use of pre-configured forms to be completed, to aid analysis of individual submissions, although free-form comments by e-mail or hard copy have also been accepted. It is anticipated that will remain the format adopted for this consultation, although there may be the addition of an on-line Response form or survey.

¹ 1 hectare = 10,000 sq. m or 2.471 acres

The details of the engagement methods to be used are not yet available but it is understood that each Town and Parish Council (local councils) will receive 1 printed copy of the document and that there will also be leaflets and posters available. There is a possibility of officer attendance at public sessions arranged by local councils and there may also be roadshows at selected locations.

Palgrave Parish Council has scheduled an open day/public meeting for Friday 15th September at the Community Centre (main hall) but details will only be finalised at a meeting with a Planning Policy officer in early September. It is presently the intention to invite representatives from Brome & Oakley and Stuston Parishes, as fellow participants in the Neighbourhood Plan, and Thrandeston.

The Parish Council will work to formulate its own collective response, as may the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Individuals, businesses, organisations and other stakeholders are encouraged and strongly recommended to submit their own views as these will help shape the places they live in over the next 20 years.

Residents of Palgrave should seize this opportunity to say which options are preferred, to propose alternatives and especially to promote their views for or against proposed development sites.

What Happens Next?

Following the conclusion of this first consultation round the responses will be analysed, strengths of opinion for each option weighed up and other assessments made. The outcome will be a revised Joint Local Plan that will undergo a second consultation prior to submission for formal examination.
