

## Neighbourhood Plan Questions & Answers Document

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### **1. What is a Neighbourhood Plan?**

It is a document that sets out those things that are important to us as a community and describes the sort of development we would wish to see for the future.

### **2. Why have we done this?**

The Waveney Local Development Plan identified large scale potential developments in our community – the land south of The Street (Bell Farm area) – around 900 homes - plus school, shops, old peoples' home, country park) and at Oakes Farm on the Beccles Road (sports fields and facilities plus around 120 homes). Development of Carlton Colville has been substantial over the last 40 years, growing from a rural village separated from Lowestoft and its suburbs to one where it is now seen a part of the Lowestoft area. There have been a number of large-scale developments that have created the feeling of just being 'dropped' onto our community. Large scale development of several hundred houses by different developers over the years have served to diminish the sense of cohesiveness and distinctiveness. We feel it is really important that new development, particularly where it is large scale, is designed so that it is part of Carlton Colville and feels and looks like it is part of the community and reflects the needs of our residents.

### **3. Why do I need to take an interest in it?**

A Neighbourhood plan allows communities like ours to have a real say in the future of the local area. It gives us the power to produce a plan with real legal weight that can direct the shape of any developments. Policies and objectives set out in it will affect how we view planning proposals as they come forward and how investment is allocated and spent in our community. Your input and approval of

this draft plan will really increase our say on the outcome of planning decisions that affect Carlton Colville

#### **4. Who has written it?**

A small group consisting of members of the public and Carlton Colville (and Gisleham) councillors, supported by planning experts, was formed to help guide the development of our Plan. Their work has included a questionnaire in 2019 which was sent to the whole community. Using this feedback plus the local knowledge of the Neighbourhood Plan Group we have produced a plan that creates a blueprint for development in our community for the period to 2036.

In the 2019 Neighbourhood Plan survey conducted across our community, the feedback included a desire for: future looking housing design that built on local traditions; better connectivity – by foot, cycle and car, better parking, a better sense of community; more sports and social facilities, more play areas, a wider variety of shops and better NHS services (eg surgery and pharmacy), allotments, care for our existing community historical and environmental

#### **5. Can I stop any more major development in Carlton Colville?**

Not specifically. For example, the 'Bell Farm' development has already been allocated in East Suffolk Council's Local Development Plan when the land becomes available. Nevertheless, we can say what type of development we would like to see – ideas on layout, style of housing, access, sustainability etc. This also applies to any other plans for development in other parts of Carlton Colville that are brought forward – we can assess them against our Neighbourhood Plan and working with East Suffolk planners accept or reject proposals.

#### **6. What about transport/roads?**

This remains a huge concern for us as a community. Any large-scale development is bound to adversely affect existing residents. East Suffolk recognise this and have stipulated that any plans that come forward for example, for Bell Farm, must have a transport assessment. This will then be reviewed by the authorities responsible eg East Suffolk and Suffolk County Highways to see how negative impacts can be reduced.

Our neighbourhood Plan cannot say where we want roads as this is outside our allowed scope but we can have input to the assessment and can also describe how we want to improve movement across our community by foot and cycle to try and take pressure off the roads network.

#### **7. What about NHS Doctors Surgery?**

It should be noted that provision of NHS services is not in our scope but there will be a requirement on the NHS commissioning bodies to provide appropriate support for any large-scale development. In addition, we cannot determine which type of retailers occupy particular shop units.

#### **8. What about flooding?**

This has been high on our radar as a Neighbourhood Plan team. Working with advisers we have identified known issues and using local knowledge, suggested where we should leave open ground, flood plain in the development of our area.

Within our design principles we have also specified that drainage solutions be put forward as part of any planning considerations.

#### **9. What about young people?**

The plan identifies the need to upgrade play facilities in our community. It also describes where a new play area could be located within any development on Bell Farm. It also describes how an area in the proposed Country Park to the west of Bell Farm might include an adventure play area.

#### **10. Will the housing be affordable?**

Any plans for large-scale housing brought forward by developers, under existing rules, need to provide a proportion of affordable housing. This is different from social housing which is typically provided by housing associations in conjunction with East Suffolk Council. We envisage that the housing any large development would be mixed – offering a range of styles and sizes suitable for a range of family situations.

#### **11. What about parking?**

In a survey of residents in Carlton Colville we found that those who responded had an average of just over 2 cars per household. In our policies we have specified the need for adequate off-street parking to cater for multi-car households.

#### **12. Will there be any benefits for existing residents?**

Without doubt, large-scale developments have an impact on current householders. What we have tried to do in the Neighbourhood Plan is to try and find ways in which we can use new developments to offset some of the negative aspects. We have done this by including things our community identified when they completed the survey in 2019. For example, we have tried to include:

- Measures to reduce flooding
- New play areas and upgrades to existing sites
- A new country park with community orchard, walks and adventure play
- Improved and new footpaths and cycle ways to ease non car movement across the area
- Improved access to the Wildlife park and potential sports and social facilities at Oakes Farm
- Design principles that will ensure any new housing is suitable in style for its setting
- A recognition of existing heritage and environmental assets for future protection

#### **13. What about the impact on the environment/sustainability?**

We asked Suffolk Wildlife Trust to undertake a survey for us. This they did and consequently we have built their proposals into the Neighbourhood Plan. For example, maintaining existing hedgerows and trees where we can, use of low lighting to mitigate light pollution and impact on wildlife. To maintain wildlife corridors and enhance existing natural resources. Members of the Community also helped us conduct a bat survey showing a lot of activity across our area.

Within the design policy we have described how we want rainwater harvesting solutions, sustainable power options, future proofing in terms of design to allow for changes to the way we heat buildings, electrical charge points for cars, eco-friendly building and fencing design to allow for movement of wildlife.

**14. What about sports and play facilities?**

Oakes Farm (behind and to the west of The Crown Pub) has already been allocated in the East Suffolk Local Plan for sports and social development. Additional play areas have been identified within the proposed Bell Farm development and within the Country Park. A priority for any investment money coming from the development will be for upgrading existing play equipment.

**15. What about pedestrians and cyclists?**

We have produced a set of policies on 'movement'. In these we set out possible ways in which we can encourage and improve the way pedestrians and cyclists can get across our community to some of the major destinations e.g. to the Gisleham shopping and industrial sites, to schools and shops and to the nature reserve and proposed country park.

**16. What are the next steps?**

We have drafted the plan but now need to get our community feedback. So, over a several week period you will be able to comment and have input to the draft. Once the plan has been updated to take account of any suggestions the whole thing goes to East Suffolk for their approval. Once this has been done they then send it to the Planning Inspectorate who also have to approve. Finally, once all the steps have been done the Plan is put forward for a 'referendum vote' in our community where you will be able to vote on its acceptance or not. Hopefully people will understand by voting for it provides the best opportunity for us to control development in our community.