

Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan
October 2019 consultation – summary of feedback

In October 2019, an informal consultation was carried out by the steering group on Gamlingay's emerging Neighbourhood Plan. All households and businesses in the Parish received a booklet summarising progress to date on the plan, including vision, objectives and draft policies. Feedback was gathered via paper/online survey, a public meeting and series of drop-in consultation sessions during October, a workshop with businesses on 3rd September and a stall at the Village Show on 21 September. The purpose of the consultation was to update residents on the neighbourhood plan and check that we had correctly captured the overall priorities for future development in Gamlingay. Thank you to everyone who came to a session and who completed the survey.

The steering group have reviewed all the feedback and a summary of the survey results and comments received is below. There were 151 responses to the survey and over 150 people also attended the different consultation sessions. The survey asked residents to indicate to what extent they agreed with the vision and objectives in the draft Neighbourhood Plan by ticking 1-5 (5 = strongly agree; 1 = strongly disagree). Percentage scores displayed below for 'agreed' represent the combined scores for 4 (agree) and 5 (strongly agree).

Vision

- 57% of respondents agreed with the vision, which demonstrates positive support for it. However, 20% indicated they were not sure and 20% disagreed with it, so we will look to see if we can simplify and clarify the vision further in the next draft.

Objective 1, Housing

- 69.6% of respondents agreed with the housing objective, demonstrating strong support for it.
- Comments received supported the need for more affordable housing and some asked why the focus on 1-2-bedroom dwellings. This was researched and defined as part of the Housing Needs Survey carried out in 2017. Further detail on this will be available in the full plan in due course.

Objective 2, Local Character

- 63.9% of respondents agreed with the local character objective, demonstrating strong support for it.
- We acknowledge the map provided in the booklet needed more explanation about the areas marked yellow – these are areas we are proposing should

be protected from development to maintain Gamlingay's landscape setting as a village with separate satellite hamlets and smallholdings.

- It is positive to note the support for this objective and we will continue to work to provide clear justification for these areas in the full plan.
- The Village Design Guide is referenced under this objective, which has been produced separately by South Cambridgeshire District Council and is due to be adopted shortly. The guide is a supplementary planning document and provides more detail on the distinctive character of the village with guidelines on how new developments should be designed.

Objective 3, Local economy

- 70.2% of respondents agreed with the local economy objective, demonstrating strong support for it.
- Feedback from businesses included: the need for limited housing tied to business use on Drove Road, protection of existing retail & food outlets and plans to encourage new ones, and the importance of connectivity (mobile phone signal and broadband) to retain and attract businesses. One business is also interested in the expansion of their own employment site at Station Road.
- We are considering the best way to incorporate this feedback into the plan. We will raise broadband / connectivity as a community action with the relevant agencies (as it is not a land use issue that a neighbourhood plan can address).
- We also acknowledge that the Rural Employment areas indicated on the map at both Mill Hill and Drove Road require further definition. We are seeking specialist support with drafting the local economy policies (as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment we are undertaking) to ensure that these areas are for rural businesses only and are limited in terms of size, scale and density of development, so as to not have a detrimental impact on nearby residents or the environment.

Objective 4, Community facilities

- 68.2% of respondents agreed with the community facilities objective, demonstrating strong support for it.
- Comments received supported the need for more amenities on the west side of the village, particularly shops and playing areas (although these should be complementary to the facilities at the Eco Hub). We acknowledge that the booklet didn't mention the range of local sports clubs and teams on offer in the parish and the full plan will cover this in more detail.
- Access to health services and the doctor's surgery came through very strongly and we will raise this as a community action and with the relevant agencies.

- We also asked two specific questions regarding the First School playing fields and the former school buildings. 62.9% of respondents agreed with designating the playing fields as a new Local Green Space and 64.9% of respondents agreed with supporting the reuse of the former school buildings and any new buildings on the site for educational and community purposes. This demonstrates strong support for using the site for community purposes. Comments received supported a range of community usages, including education, healthcare and retail. We are therefore exploring how best to capture this feedback in the plan and are liaising with other stakeholders on this too.

Objective 5, Transport

- 80.1% of respondents agreed with the transport objective, demonstrating very strong support for it.
- Comments received included support for: more cycleways and cycle parking in the village, circular walking routes around the village, more parking for residential developments. On street parking / congestion on central village roads was noted as a concern, as was speeding. Through the neighbourhood plan, we are trying to encourage other ways of getting around (walking/cycling) to reduce the number of cars on the roads. We will also raise this as a community action and flag highways issues such as this with Cambridgeshire County Council and other agencies.

Objective 6, Environment

- 65.5% of respondents agreed with the environment objective, demonstrating strong support for it.
- Comments received noted the need for better explanation and referencing of the different green spaces across the parish and their uses, as this will help to justify why more green spaces are required on the west side of the village. We have also noted that Charnock Green is not a public green space.
- The 200m cordon around Gamlingay Wood was recommended to us by the Wildlife Trust and we will look to provide clearer justification for this within the plan to protect it from harmful development. A cordon around Potton Wood was also proposed in the comments received and we will raise this with Potton Town Council.
- The map in the booklet also indicated important views / vistas (purple arrows) to be maintained. These were proposed as part of the Village Design Guide which has already been produced and consulted upon. The full plan will have more detail on these views, including photos. Any development in these areas should be designed to ensure these views and vistas are not obstructed.

Next steps

The steering group are currently working on the draft plan, with support from AECOM who are undertaking the Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA). The Scoping report for this is out for consultation with the three statutory bodies until 5 February 2020. Once the SEA has been completed, a final draft of the plan will be put out to formal consultation (known as Reg.14 Pre-submission consultation). We are aiming for this to happen in the Spring / Summer (2020) and will publicise the dates for this in due course. After this, the plan will be submitted to South Cambridgeshire District Council for examination and then Referendum later in 2020.

If you would like further information, please see our website Gamlingay-future.uk or contact the Neighbourhood Plan Secretary on (01767) 650310 or via email clerk@gamlingay-pc.gov.uk.