





The Issues

Debenham is facing unprecedented change. Central government and Mid Suffolk District Council require villages like Debenham to accommodate more housing.

The current system is dependent on:

1. Landowners responding to the call for land for development
2. Landowners doing independent deals with developers, who could then vigorously seek planning approvals in advance of the community's wishes being expressed in a Neighbourhood Plan.

In response to MSDC's "call for development sites" 7 major sites have been proposed for development in Debenham. On one of these sites, land north of Gracechurch St, an outline planning application has recently been submitted.





Community Concerns

The challenge for Debenham is how can we accommodate more housing whilst maintaining the special character of the village, and ensuring any new development properly meets the needs of the village.

The three primary concerns residents have expressed with any village development are:

1. The impact on Traffic, Parking, Flooding and general Infrastructure
2. Appropriate provision of affordable housing
3. Diminution of the character, beauty, tranquility and social cohesion of the community



How have these issues and concerns been addressed?

The Parish Council and Neighbourhood Plan Committee have prepared the Debenham Neighbourhood Plan which takes into account all issues and concerns and proposes practical solutions to address them.

The Neighbourhood Plan needs the endorsement of the residents for it to be effective.

All residents need to make their views known directly to MSDC on any planning application.



Neighbourhood Plan – In Brief

What it is

What it
Proposes

How it is
used



Neighbourhood Plan – What it is

- A Neighbourhood Plan sets out the community wishes and desires, and proposes planning policies for the use and development of land.
- The Plan guides and steers development to the most appropriate sites. Its policies cover local issues such as the type, design, location and mix of housing that the village requires. Policies also cover issues such as flooding, traffic congestion, which green spaces should be protected and what landscaping is required in and around new development.
- Once the Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted, it will form part of the statutory planning framework for the area and the policies and proposals contained within it will be used as a basis for the determination of planning applications, alongside the District Local Plan.



Neighbourhood Plan – What it proposes

- These sites, SS0031, SS0902 and SS0268, developed in sequence, could provide the housing requirement for the village between 2016 and 2036, whilst minimising the impact of traffic flows, and flooding.
- Site SS0268 to be developed only if there is proven unmet housing need following the successful development of sites SS0031 and SS0902.
- Together these sites could deliver between 112 and 262 new dwellings, which will provide some flexibility for accommodating changing housing requirements during the Plan period.
- These sites provide full conformance to the requirements of the emerging Mid Suffolk Local Plan.





Neighbourhood Plan – How it is used.

- Once the Neighbourhood Plan is adopted, it becomes part of the statutory decision making process.
- The Neighbourhood Plan is one method of influencing development in the area, it is vitally important that all residents also comment directly to Mid Suffolk District Council on all planning applications



What are we up against?

- Central Government and Mid Suffolk District Council have committed to the provision of new housing.
- The current draft Neighbourhood Plan has not yet been adopted and is therefore deemed to be an emerging plan, and consequently does not carry as much weight as a fully adopted plan. It is **vital** that the draft plan is approved by the residents to enable it to be adopted as soon as possible.
- Developers are more vigorous in pursuing their own applications where a Neighbourhood Plan has not yet been adopted.



Planning Applications - Your Views & Why they Count

- In assessing planning applications the local council must take into consideration the views, comments and objections of the residents. In order to be valid any objections must be based on the criteria established within the planning application and the issues affected by them.
- The more comments and objections that are received from individual residents, the greater the weight they have in the decision making process.
- It is therefore crucial that every adult resident registers their own individual comments and objections in accordance with the procedure as published.



Proposed New Development

Leisure Centre

School





Action – Taylor Wimpey Application

Key Points for Submitting your Comments

- The adverse impact of the proposed development would significantly outweigh any benefits. There would be:
 - a high negative visual impact on a valued and sensitive landscape
 - a negative impact on traffic flows along Gracechurch Street and the High Street.
 - increase the risk of flooding
- The scale of development would fundamentally alter the character and nature of the village.
- The development is not sustainable. There is a high level of commuting from Debenham to jobs in other locations, and such a significant increase in houses is not matched by the number of jobs within the area.
- Houses still for sale - no demand for a development of such a scale in the area.
- Pedestrian safety would be severely compromised - particularly along Gracechurch Street.
- There are far more suitable sites allocated within the Neighbourhood Plan which address all of the above issues and delivers the housing numbers required in MSDC emerging Local plan.



Neighbourhood Plan – Your Views & Why they Count

- The Neighbourhood Plan cannot be adopted without the endorsement of the residents.



What weight can be given to an emerging neighbourhood plan?

S216 National Planning Guidance states: “From the day of publication, decision makers may also give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans”.

Debenham’s Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared following extensive community consultation, advice from independent planning and Neighbourhood Plan experts and its policies accord with National Planning Policies. Hence MSDC decision makers can be requested to carefully consider and give weight to the site allocation policies in Debenham’s Neighbourhood Plan.



What do independent experts think of the site that Taylor Wimpey wish to develop?

AECOM Infrastructure and Environment UK, a national company with a high reputation, were commissioned by Debenham Parish Council to undertake an independent assessment of the suitability for development of the competing sites in Debenham.

AECOM's assessment was that the site north of Gracechurch Street proposed by Taylor Wimpey was not suitable for development for a variety of reasons, including that there would be significant negative traffic impacts, and the scale of development would have a high negative visual impact.



Action – Neighbourhood Plan

It is vital that you submit your comments on the Neighbourhood Plan as soon as possible by:

- Completing the online form on the Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan website (www.debenhamnp.onesuffolk.net)
- Completing the Questionnaire available at this meeting and from Webster's newsagent.
- By direct email to: NPfeedback@debenhampc.org.uk

The deadline for submission of comments is the 16th March 2018. However, the sooner we have your comments, the sooner it can be progressed to the next stage of adoption.

Completed questionnaires outside of this meeting should be taken to Webster's newsagent.



Action – Next Steps

- Submit your comments on the Taylor Wimpey development as soon as possible. They can be provided both online or in writing, **but must be received no later than the 1st February 2018.**
- Complete the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire

Copies of these slides will be available to download from the Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan website (www.debenhamnp.onesuffolk.net)