



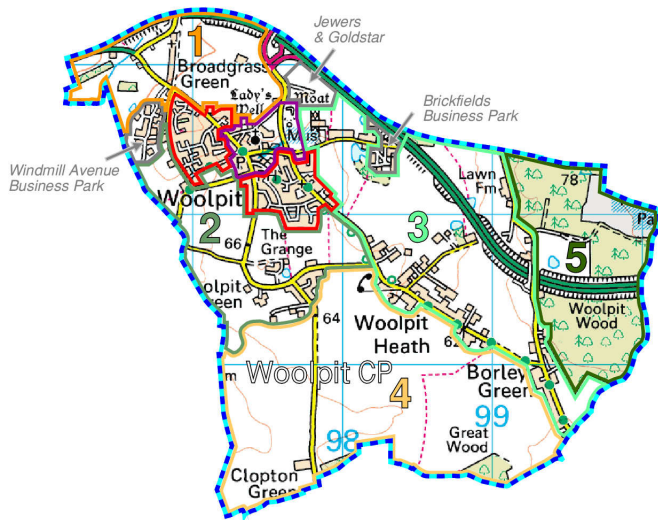
www.woolpit.org/WNP/

Building evidence for the plan

The Steering Group is working to build a base of evidence. This will help us to identify objectives, and then formulate policies and projects which will constitute the Neighbourhood Plan.

One part of this evidence is being derived from the ongoing community consultation. The interim report on this consultation formed much of the last newsletter, in August.

Another group are compiling a character appraisal of the village. This consists of a detailed description of different parts of the parish, achieved by walking each road and noting key details about the natural and built environment. The aim is to identify the character of each area, and highlight the important features which give it that character — most of which we would try to conserve wherever possible.



Apart from the village centre and the Conservation Area, the character appraisal divides the parish into five zones

A third group are examining statistical data, obtained from the census data and other government sources, as well as from reports by local government and independent bodies. By analysing this data we can draw conclusions about such things as car use, or the age profile of the village population, for example.

We are receiving some help from Mid Suffolk District Council with certain aspects of this work.

Exhibition to be held on 12 November

To show everyone the stage we have reached in producing the Neighbourhood Plan, we are going to hold an event on **Saturday 12 November, from 10 am to 4 pm in the Institute**. There will be a presentation (probably both a morning and an afternoon session), exhibitions, opportunities to discuss matters with the Steering Group, comment and make your own suggestions. We are hoping to receive a lot of feedback.

Items to view will include our vision statement. This sets out how we would like Woolpit to be in 15 or even 25 years from now. We also hope to display the village character appraisal, in draft form at least; and there will be maps and photos. In addition there will be charts and analysis taken from statistical data.

An assembly at Woolpit School has been held, so that the children know about the Neighbourhood Plan. We hope we will be able to showcase some of their work.

This event will be publicised more widely around the village, but put this date in your diary, and visit the website for updates!

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Proposed housing developments

Drinkstone Road / Rags Lane

Many residents were unimpressed by Persimmon's consultation in the Village Hall, commenting on the lack of preparation and the inability of those staffing the event to answer questions in any detail. Issues that were raised included the difficulty of access along a narrow road, the scale and high housing density of the proposed development, and the adverse impact on wildlife and the environment, not to mention the lack of drainage capacity and the proximity to the Conservation Area that covers all of the centre of Woolpit. It was hard to see any significant benefits for the village in this plan.

Persimmon's proposal is for 60 dwellings, with pedestrian access from Rags Lane and vehicle access from Drinkstone Road. Most of the ancient hedge along the south side of the site would have to be removed to provide visibility for vehicles. Questions about the route for construction traffic caused confusion among Persimmon's staff. Photographs to illustrate the possible house types seemed to have been chosen at random, while the illustrative layout was admitted to be completely unrepresentative of any eventual plan.

Old Stowmarket Road

As reported in the last newsletter, this planning application has been passed by Mid Suffolk's Planning Committee. Pigeon Investment Management have now put the land up for sale with outline planning permission, so they are looking for a builder to take on the project.

Green Road

There is no definite news about this application, and at the time of writing Mid Suffolk have not set a date for the Planning Committee to make a decision.

However, Suffolk County Council have been asked to investigate ways of mitigating the difficulties posed by the narrow footway along Green Road between Mill Lane and Drinkstone Road. The road safety issues at this point provoked severe criticism of this application by SCC Highways.

Street Farm

We have known for some time that this site is likely to be the subject of a planning proposal, but details have been hard to come by until now.

At the Parish Council meeting on 3 October we were informed that Hopkins Homes — the largest independent property developer in East Anglia — have had talks with some councillors. A plan has been outlined for Street Farm which would comprise 450 houses, with some commercial property and a retail development as well.

Access would be by means of a road from the A14 interchange which would link through to Bury Road in the vicinity of the exit from Wrights Way.

In addition to the usual public green spaces, there is also the potential for another school site. Given that the outlined development would generate about 135 children of primary school age, such a need would obviously arise.

At present Hopkins Homes have no plans for a public consultation. The proposal is at a very early stage, and they are currently in discussions with Mid Suffolk District Council and Suffolk County Council.

As always, if you would like to pass on your views about this proposal, please contact

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or any member of the Steering Group — go to

www.woolpit.org/WNP/contact.html