

Werrington Neighbourhood Plan

**Project inception meeting:
18 March 2019**

Notes & actions



Proposal from Cambridgeshire ACRE – March 2019

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IN ATTENDANCE

Werrington Neighbourhood Plan Group (NDP group):

Vince Moon (chair), Sally Weald (sec), Rob Boulton, Roy Beard, Cathy Holland, Mike Holland, Colin Watson, Linda Watson, Mick Wheatley, Geoff Smith (Treasurer)

Cambridgeshire ACRE:

Mark Deas, Rural Housing Enabler & Neighbourhood Planning Officer, Natalie Blaken, Planning Director, Nupremis (Cambridgeshire ACRE associate)

KEY POINTS FROM MEETING

Neighbourhood Plan group update

The origins of the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) can be traced back to 2010 when the Neighbourhood Council attempted to put in place a NP. The goal posts changed when the Localism Act introduced a new layer of planning policy - Neighbourhood Planning. In addition, local funding diminished from Peterborough City Council (PCC).

The Neighbourhood Council had completed a consultation which is summarised in 'Growing Together- The Werrington Neighbourhood Plan 2010'. The group consider it to have limited use now as it is nine years old and addressed some issues which are less relevant to the current NP.

Werrington's application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area was approved by PCC on 15th October 2018. The designated area can be found [here](#). The area includes Werrington North and part of the Werrington South ward, broadly communities that feed into Fulbridge Road. The area totals approximately 11,000 inhabitants and 5,000 households.

Werrington is not a parish and therefore has a designated Neighbourhood Council. A Neighbourhood Forum has been established to manage the NP (approved by Peterborough CC on 28th January 2019). The Forum has a mailing list of 50 people who have expressed an interest in the NP.

The Neighbourhood Council has a productive working relationship with Phil Hylton in the Planning Policy Team at PCC. It is not considered that an MOU is appropriate at this time.

Vision & Objectives

The Group support a vision which seeks to 'Preserve and enhance the best of what we have in Werrington and ensure appropriate development adopts distinctive character and design principles'.

The Neighbourhood Council will refine the Vision and define key objectives which will then guide NP policies. The group is keen to ensure that all sections of the community can participate particularly hard to reach groups, businesses and landowners.

The Neighbourhood Council is seeking to produce a light touch NP. However, the group has identified an extensive list of spatial policies that have the potential to be included in the NP. Cambridgeshire ACRE would recommend refining and prioritising this list through the consultation process. It is also appropriate to assess which policy areas may already be appropriately addressed

in the PCC development plan. Policies or actions which are not appropriate in a NP can be included in an Appendix to the NP or a separate action plan.

The following issues / policy options were identified:

- Land at Werrington Centre allocated for 50 homes in Local Plan on the site of a social services building. The land is now in private ownership and the group anticipates an increase of up to 130 units including flats and/or affordable homes.
- Protect vulnerable areas from inappropriate development. Key areas include:
 - David's Lane open spaces
 - Newt Pond site (Network Rail ownership with a 5 year management plan)
 - Tree avenues – vulnerable from widened road and transport intervention
 - Key open spaces such as Werrington Brook and Cuckoos Hollow
 - Distinctive character areas
- Inappropriate infill – there are many spacious plots (Lincoln Road) outside the Conservation Area. Recent applications suggest intensification of plots would detract from the distinctive character of these parts of Werrington.
- Improve the vitality and vibrancy of Werrington Centre – issues include car parking and need to support local independent business. Risk of potential additional development land if existing users were to be lost.
- PCC Asset transfer – existing community assets potentially transferred into community holdings. Protect assets under threat including bowling green , allotments, library, youth clubs and other PCC buildings.
- New Sports Centre – want to promote and maintain momentum including a swimming pool. Safeguarding concerns have created issues about community access to existing facilities which are located within a school.

The potential governance structure of the group may change. Werrington is preparing to submit a Parish Council application which is supported by PCC. It is seen as a mechanism to sit alongside the NP to engage and reinvigorate the community. It may also have an impact upon the potential for transfer of assets to the local community (Parish or Neighbourhood Council).

It was agreed that the NP group had further work to do before it could begin to refine a vision and key priorities.

Cambridgeshire ACRE have undertaken a scoping workshop with other NP groups to help develop their NP vision, themes and priorities. The NP Group should consider including this in their next tranche of work.

Consultation

Werrington Neighbourhood Council's consultation currently includes an analysis from drop in sessions throughout 2017/2018. The group has summarised this in terms of the good and bad things about living in Werrington and the changes people would like to see.

The profile of the Neighbourhood Plan has been raised in the local magazine 'Spotlight' which will be delivered again in mid-May 2019. The group has discussed distributing a questionnaire alongside Spotlight (but need to agree details 8 weeks before delivery). The group also has an active Facebook page.

Cambridgeshire ACRE would recommend that the group explore an on-line questionnaire – supplemented by paper questionnaire to ensure those less familiar with IT have the opportunity to respond. There are survey tools such as Survey Monkey and Smart Survey available.

The Werrington Carnival on 22nd June 2019 is seen as a key opportunity to engage the community. Points to consider include:

- Need to be clear about what information is being sought and how this will help shape the emerging NP priorities
- The respective timings of the Carnival and survey mean that the carnival can be used to raise awareness of the survey and boost the response rate. It will not be able to inform what issues are included in the survey
- Important to capture respondent information, eg. age group, area of residence
- The Carnival is likely to attract families with children
- It is an opportunity to promote the NP and recruit more volunteers skills and resources (need to identify current gaps)
- Promotional activities – eg. lucky dip – can help engage people
- A picture postcard could be used at the carnival to launch the questionnaire
- There is potential to incorporate a sixth form project into the consultation process

The group has an existing list of local community groups and associations although a Consultation Strategy needs to be developed. This should consider how to engage statutory consultees and landowners. Statutory consultees can make a valuable contribution to the NP process. Early engagement is advised where they address issues that are likely to be important topics for the NP.

There is a range of good practice on community consultation available. These are available from Locality.

<https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/how-to-consult-with-your-community/>

<https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/write-conduct-social-surveys-gather-data-neighbourhood-plan/>

ACTION: NP group to develop a consultation strategy and confirm the purpose of the next planned stage of community consultation

Evidence base

No specific research has been undertaken to date. However, there will be existing evidence that could be pulled together. Cambridgeshire ACRE would recommend that the group compile a list of potential data sources and collate existing information and determine what assessment / intelligence and evidence is needed to provide the appropriate rationale for the planning policies.

The meeting discussed the various types of evidence that are available such as surveys, secondary data and consultations with statutory bodies. Cambridgeshire ACRE advised using as wide a range of sources and methods as possible and cautioned against placing too much emphasis on a survey of residents.

Current evidence includes:

- Werrington Conservation Area Appraisal – Report and Management Plan March 2008 adopted by PCC as approved planning guidance.
- Trees Survey completed by City Council
- Existing evidence may include gaps in facilities such as Open Space provision or playparks

Cambridgeshire ACRE suggested, as an example of an alternative source of evidence, undertaking a Character Assessment. This could potentially capture evidence on the physical characteristics that people value and make Werrington special, and could be used to influence the design of future developments. It was agreed that this was a project that could be undertaken locally.

The group discussed the appropriateness of Design Codes and the additional technical support that Locality can provide. Design codes are appropriate generally where the NP is allocating additional growth. (Financial/ technical support would only be available via Locality if the NP was allocating sites for housing)

Action – Cambridgeshire ACRE to provide links to templates for undertaking a character assessment

The group wants to develop a full list of Community Assets. It also wants to understand the impact / options / examples of asset transfer. Although unlikely to be a consideration for the NP, the group would like to consider viability issues and ongoing management and responsibilities of taking on board a 25 year lease.

Action – Cambridgeshire ACRE to provide contact details for their staff dealing with these issues

It was suggested that the group consider undertaking a ‘Demographic and Socio-Economic Review’ of the NP area to pull together the key statistics and issues relating to demography, housing, employment and deprivation. NOMIS is one useful source but there are a range available. This work can be completed by the group or Cambridgeshire ACRE.

Action – NP to produce a profile of the NP area based on secondary data sets (potentially with support from Cambridgeshire ACRE)

It is likely that Local Green Space designation will be an important part of the NP. Four open spaces are designated in the Peterborough City Development Plan, two of which the Neighbourhood Council submitted additional recommendations for designation. The Group will need to consider the National Planning Policy Framework Guidance criteria for green space allocations and provide an evidenced assessment in determining whether any further open space policy safeguards are appropriate in the NP.

The Werrington Local Centre is an important asset but challenges include: regeneration, vacancy rates, loss of retail uses, number of charity shops, parking availability, need to secure independent shops, loss of Norwich and Peterborough Building Society and need to secure longer term vitality and viability. The consultation could help to understand the appetite to protect and safeguard the centre. Further analysis and survey of this issue is required.

Policy context

The Werrington NP will need to conform with the National Planning Policy Framework 2018 and strategic policies in the adopted Peterborough City Core Strategy DPD adopted in 2011. The Werrington NP will, within this context, be able to choose the breadth of its scope. It could focus on one or two specific issues or attempt to provide a Werrington context for each section of the Local Plan. The route chosen has implications for the resource, cost and time required to complete the NP.

A review of the wider policy context can be a helpful way of identifying gaps and issues that the NP could address.

It is important to note that PCC are preparing a new Local Plan which was submitted to the Secretary of State on 26th March 2018. The Council consulted on main modifications to the plan in February 2019. Following consideration of the consultation responses – the plan will move through the council to adoption later this year. The NP would need to conform with any newly adopted development plan.

Actions – The group to develop an analysis of the strategic planning policy context for Werrington (potentially with support from Cambridgeshire ACRE).

NP group capacity

The Neighbourhood Council has no direct staffing resources. It has a well supported Facebook page and access to Spotlight (a community magazine). The group has used these to help develop a skills profile and call for more resources and skills. Planning advice is secured locally.

PCC has produced a frequently asked questions document on neighbourhood planning and the support it will provide for NP groups. The group should ensure that it is fit for purpose. Addressing the following issues will help:

- Structure
- Skill sets/ gaps
- Capacity building/ training
- Support from PCC
- Relationship between NP group and CACRE
- Locality resources – range of toolkits, good practice guides and resources

Next steps

- Consultation and promotion in Spotlight
- Carnival & other consultation ensuring hard to reach groups are included
- Develop the consultation strategy including questionnaire
- Developing the evidence base (eg. socio- economic profile; character assessment; assets list)
- Identifying what is in scope for NP – is it really a light touch plan?

Potential topics include:

- Opportunity areas for regeneration / investment in local centres
- Environmental, open space and community facilities provision
- Character assessments – design and quality
- Transport issues and permeability

Current activities will focus on **consultation, evidence gathering and understanding the policy context**. Triangulating this work will help to agree the focus of the NP. Cambridgeshire ACRE would

propose holding a scoping workshop at this stage to agree what must, could and should not be within scope of the NP. The next stage beyond this is likely to be further consultation and more detailed evidence collection leading to a draft NP for a 'regulation 14' consultation.

The NP group should **identify potential costs** that are likely to be incurred in 2019/20 that could be funded through the Locality support programme. Eligible costs could be: venue hire, printing & mailing, website development, data purchase and consultancy support.

No expenditure can be claimed retrospectively. Where expenditure is small and can be met elsewhere it may be appropriate not to bid for these costs. This may stretch the available £9,000 grant further and reduce bureaucracy. NDP groups can apply for Additional Support Grant (up to £8,000) and Technical Support. However, they must meet criteria to be eligible for these and it is unlikely that Werrington NP group will meet the criteria.

OUTLINE WORK PLAN

The following outline workplan is divided into work that can be done before Locality grant support is approved and work that should be undertaken afterwards. All Cambridgeshire ACRE work has been assumed to be scheduled after grant support is confirmed as the grant cannot be used retrospectively.

Pre-funding approval	
NP group to review project plan	April 2019
NP group to undertake community consultation	June 2019
NP group to continue recruiting volunteers	On-going
NP group to commence compiling initial evidence base	On-going
NP group to submit funding application	April 2019
Post-funding approval	
NP group to review community consultation results and identify / address any evidence gaps – potential for Cambridgeshire ACRE challenge role	July 2019
Cambridgeshire ACRE offer to produce demographic, housing and socio-economic profile for Werrington (offer to help /provide support)	June/ July 2019
Cambridgeshire ACRE offer to produce a planning policy context analysis for Werrington	June / July 2019
Focussed Evidence Base work	June / July 2019
Cambridgeshire ACRE to run facilitated workshop to scope the NP. This will be based on consultation findings, the initial evidence base and analysis of local policy context	September 2019

The NP group will need to make a judgement on which areas of evidence to focus initial efforts. These should be topics that can be completed in-house and will therefore not require consultancy support (and costs). It is suggested that the NP group prioritise undertaking the consultation and a character assessment. Timescales for the socio economic analysis and policy context will depend on whether consultancy support is required.

The timings above are indicative.

COSTS

Cambridgeshire ACRE work is costed at £400 per day plus VAT. This will include reasonable expenses including one journey to Werrington to run the workshop and present findings from any work commissioned (eg. the profile and policy review).

For each activity listed below, the role that Cambridgeshire ACRE will play is described alongside the number of days committed to the activity.

Activity	Cambridgeshire ACRE role	Days work
Locality application	Support application for grant (at no charge)	0
Consultation support	Provide advice, analysis and support on consultation activities	1
Evidence base	Produce 'Demographic & Socio-Economic Review' with all sources fully referenced and key data used provided in supporting spreadsheets; or,	2.5
	Provide advice and review if work completed internally	1
Planning policy context analysis	Review existing and emerging Local Plan and NPPF, liaise with PCC and produce short report identifying key issues, gaps and opportunities	2.5
Scoping workshop to progress themes, objectives and policy ideas	Produce initial SWOT analysis. Facilitate workshop with NP group and other key stakeholders to scope themes, objectives and policy ideas. Will include presentation of key findings from any commissioned work. Produce post-workshop report.	3

The above is provided as a menu of items. We are happy to discuss the precise details of the support provided and the number of days we allocate to each day. However, this should be agreed before a grant application is made to Locality.

Cambridgeshire ACRE will provide telephone support for the funding application at no charge. In addition, the NP group should consider other direct costs that it could incur in undertaking its role. These are most likely to relate to the consultation and communication work required and could include:

- Printing and/or postage of consultation/ survey materials
- Printing/ production of publicity materials (eg. banners, fliers)
- Work on website
- Hiring venues/ refreshments
- Data purchase (eg. Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Environment Records Centre)

No costs can be claimed against the Locality support grant retrospectively.