

Dereham Town Plan. Examination statement.

Dear Mr Manning,

The residents of Dereham have serious concerns over the Breckland Local Plan and we, the Toftwood Life Community Group, would like to present our views on the relevant issues and with your help we hope we can produce a improved plan that will better meet the needs of the current and future generations of this town.

When the core values and examination guidelines are used as a benchmark to measure the soundness of the plan it confirms our view that the current plan is seriously flawed and we can provide evidence to justify this.

We have outlined below the issues that are of greatest concern in the draft plan:

Positively prepared :

Presumably, for expediency, it appears the draft plan has been modelled on current applications from 'out of town' developers and investment companies, who have no genuine interest in or knowledge of Dereham. They have defined their preferred sites which have since been incorporated into the Local Plan. This can only be described as Developer-led. The Local Authority surely have an obligation to develop a Local Plan specifically to meet the needs of Dereham and it's existing and anticipated future residents?

A positively prepared plan should identify a network of Green Infrastructure. In the draft plan map LP(025)030 the highlighting of the River Tudd which forms a green Corridor, has been deleted rendering this feature virtually invisible. This is a highly sensitive environmental area, as this water course flows into a nearby SSSI. and this area is habitat to Red List bird species. This information should surely be readily available for the examination process?

Justification:

The Local Plan fails to include any details or references to the testing of reasonable alternatives to the 'preferred' sites. As part of legal requirements in the schedule of matters and issues for the examination of the Local Plan (1.7) and national planning policy framework (para 182), **the Local Plan fails the test of soundness and it is therefore our opinion that it cannot be justified if no reasonable alternatives have been considered.**

The preferred site LP(025)030 because of its location, would have a negative impact on the environmental and social well-being of the Local Community, not least due to the loss of a future community wood and green space as advocated in the Dereham Green Infrastructure Study of 2008. It's impractical distance from the town centre and High Schools, together with the restricted access, make it a poor choice when other alternatives clearly deliver a better outcome.

The Dereham Town Council are in the process of developing a neighbourhood plan and have done much work to progress this. They have already put forward a plan based on local knowledge that would be more sustainable and better able to meet the needs of the Local Community. The Hopkins Homes planning application LP(025)003 has been down graded to alternative status favouring other sites. It bears far fewer obstacles in delivery and there is therefore no rational explanation for it being rejected as a preferred site, it could be incorporated and is ideally situated to form part of a comprehensive Dereham Town Plan.

We would ask you to look closely at the Dereham Town Plan and the Hopkins Home application. Perhaps you would also consider it pertinent to request evidence from the Local Authority on testing and their reasons for the apparent rejection of all the reasonable alternative sites.

We look forward to meeting you at the formal hearings in May and June.

Val Baker,

Spokesperson for:

Toftwood Life Community.

VA Baker
13 Beech Drive
Toftwood, Dereham NR19 1LY.

Enc. Evidence : Maps Dereham Town Plan, preferred sites LP(025)030, LP(025)003.



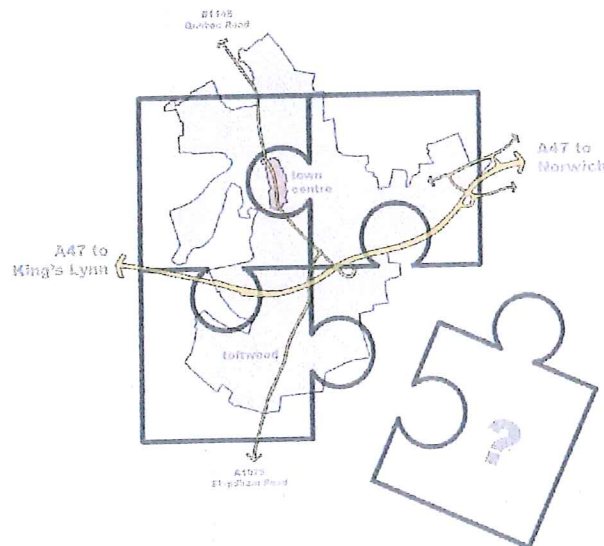
DEREHAM TOWN COUNCIL

IT'S TIME FOR A PROPER PLAN FOR DEREHAM

The Town Council is preparing a Neighbourhood Plan to guide the development of the town over the next twenty years.

Our town has suffered from haphazard planning decisions for many years. The A47 scheme of the 1980s solved some problems, but created others. The decline in some of our old industries has not been made up by new companies, though we have a number of successful industrial estates.

Over the years, we have been frustrated that no single development has been big enough to improve the local infrastructure. The result is a town that often struggles to work as well as it should and could do for us all.

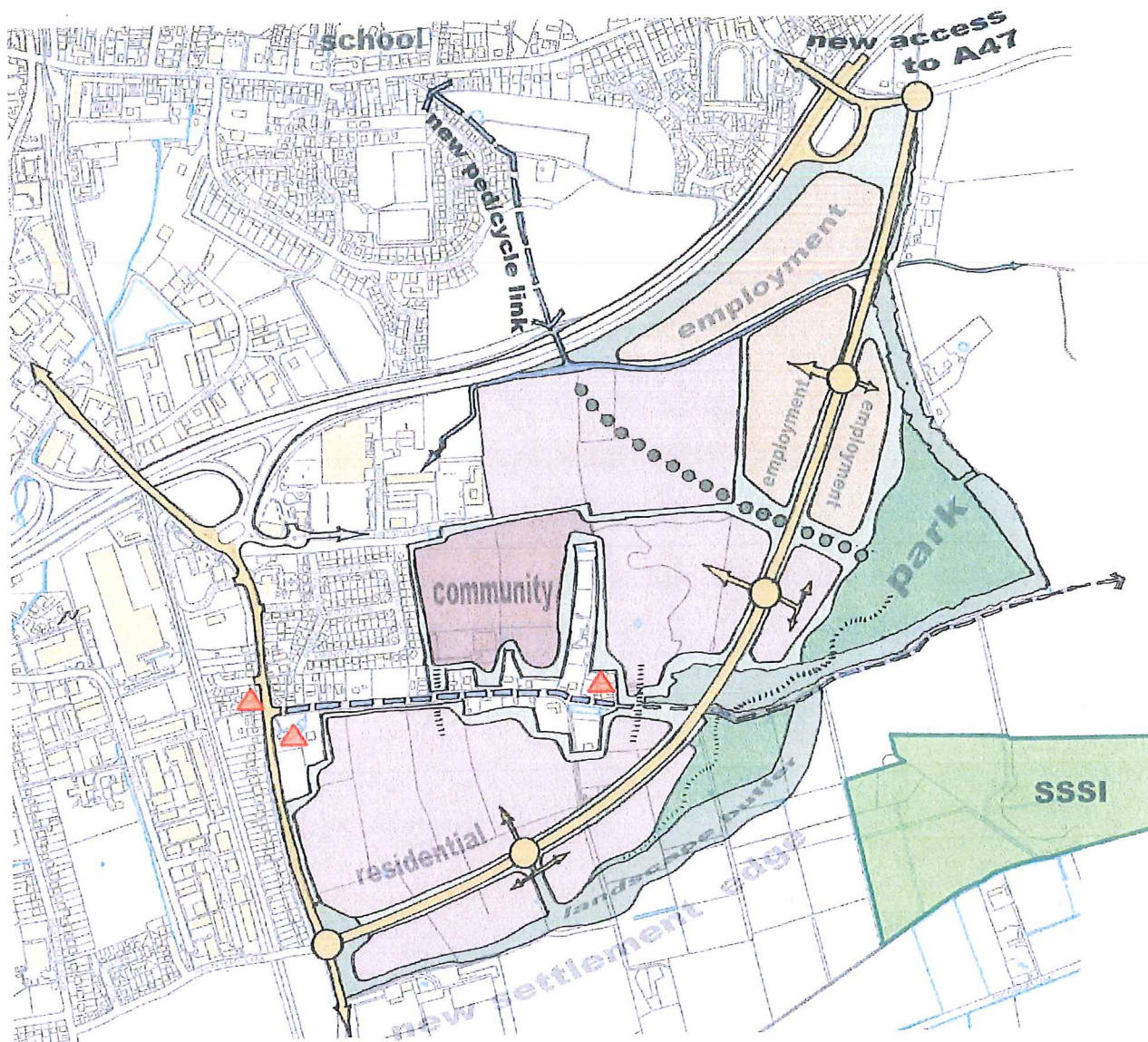


THE MISSING PIECE OF DEREHAM'S JIGSAW PUZZLE

We think we're missing a key piece in our 'jigsaw puzzle'. We think we should grow our town to the south east of the A47, in a thoughtful way which benefits the whole town by providing:

- New high tech, office, hotel and other jobs to keep in step with housing growth and to drive the delivery of super-fast broadband access for the whole town
- A new link road connecting Yaxham Road with the A47 at Mattishall Road to significantly reduce pressure on the Tavern Lane and Kingston Road junctions
- Up to 2,000 new homes that will meet all our housing needs over the next 20 years or more, including 600 affordable homes to rent and buy
- A new primary school, community centre and other local services
- A new country park to connect with Greenfields and to be part of a wider 'green ring' of publicly accessible green spaces, cycleways and footpaths around the town

The proposed dualling of the A47 from Dereham to Norwich will make us a more attractive place for new businesses. The location of the land close to the A47 will make it easy for local people to access the new jobs as well as the new companies to reach their customers and suppliers. And the chance to connect the A47 to Yaxham Road will make a big difference to everyone living and working on the south side of the town, or commuting into the town from this direction.



WHAT NEXT?

We have developed our proposals to shape the future planning of our town. Breckland's Local Plan later this year is the first opportunity for us to make a difference, if the local community and others support us. We hope that the many advantages of our plan will stop the same mistakes being made over again.

We have therefore arranged a series of publicity events over the next month to give everyone that lives and works in the town the opportunity to have their say – check our website at <http://derehamtc.norfolkparishes.gov.uk/> or the local press for details.

Legend

-  Residential Planning Permissions (2011- June 30 2016)
-  Settlement Boundary
-  Pending Planning Applications

Preferred and Alternative Sites

-  Alternative
-  Preferred

