

East Northamptonshire Council & Countryside Agency
Sustainable Rural Planning Policies
Stakeholder Meeting – Stage 1
Monday 16 May 2005

Produced by Baker Associates

Attendees

Terry Begley (ENDC – Planning Policy)	Carolyn Corker (Stoke Doyle, Pitton & Wadenhoe PC)
Karen Devonport (Countryside Agency EM)	Peter Leach (resident)
John Baker (Baker Associates)	Nigel Searle (Brigstock Parish Council)
Sharon Jefferies (Baker Associates)	Fiona Cowan (Collyweston PC)
Felix Marsh (ACRE – Rural Housing Enabler)	Karen Edwards (Rockingham Forest Trust)
Barry Graves (SERVE & East Northants Voluntary Action)	Jenny Hodgson (Stanwick PC)
Kathy George (ENC - Economic Dev)	Terrie Watson (ENC)
Derek Nickless (ENC – Housing)	Karen Horner (ENC/North Northants JPU)
Tom Grozdoski (ENC – Economic Dev)	

Apologies

Jo Russell (Countryside Agency)	Lucy Hawes (ENDC - Rural Transport Partnership)
John Richardson MBE (Leader ENDC)	Hilary (King's Cliffe Parish Council)
Mrs A Webb (Warmington PC)	Mrs F Turner (Newton Bromswold PC)

Preparation

The Stakeholder Group were forwarded the Stage 1 report and appendices. They were asked to read this material in preparation of the Stage 1 meeting, in order to comment on:

- the issues that are faced by the rural areas in East Northamptonshire, and by the inhabitants of rural settlements
- what sustainability means in rural areas and for smaller settlements
- whether the information gathered so far for this project is appropriate and how it needs to be supplemented
- which areas should be examined as case studies
- who we should be talking to in the area
- areas of policy development that are needed, to increase the sustainability of the network of smaller settlements.

Introduction to project

John Baker of Baker Associates presented an outline to the project.

Group discussion: Key issues facing rural areas and settlements in East Northants

Community Safety

- Anti-social behaviour & juvenile behaviour.
- Problem in transportation links for young people to facilities, such as cinema.
- Impacts on quality of life (in rural areas).

- Degree in tolerance in rural areas can be seen as less than in urban areas.

Social facilities

- Elderly people – e.g. gaining benefits advice.
- Elderly people keep cars longer in rural areas – because of need, when maybe they can not afford to run a car.

Services, shops, post office

- Steady decline of services and facilities in the district, over the years.
- Schools – people move to be close to their choice of school – within catchment area.
- Housing development does not always bring new services/facilities.

Economic Development

- There is a skills shortage (construction – relating to new development in the district).
- Public transport problem in the district.
- Lack of employment space for smaller start-ups.
- Employment high in the district.
- ICT does not cover the full district – which is needed for most new businesses.
- Northampton Partnership – Project. Just starting (ENC Economic Dev Department) – empty properties/redundant land in rural areas – available to diversify. Also will identify when an employment type is at saturation point - therefore advice to residents looking at starting a new business.
- Incentives required to support new business in rural areas.
- Need policies to support employment, which is appropriate to skills base in the district.
- Loss of trades & crafts in the district – dry-walling, thatching etc – Rockingham Forest Trust is re-training in some of these skills.
- Bed and breakfast's are growing in the district.
- There is a lot of business support in the district, which can be confusing. Issue is the lack of co-ordination between the organisations offering support.

Transport

- Public transport declined.
- Poor access to hospitals for the elderly.

Social/community

- Loss of community feel for many villagers
- New comers seen as not willing to integrate and expectations misguided when moving to rural village – may seem as not wanting to make an effort to be part of the village.
- Community Officer to help people integrate into the community – suggested use of S106 contributions.

Boundaries

- Collyweston – closer to Stamford and district boundaries – therefore need to look beyond the district boundary lines.
- People identify with the closest local town – don't take account of boundaries.
- Boundaries cause problems in service provision, e.g. bus tokens only given with boundaries – does not reflect how people live, e.g. use of facilities/services between settlements.

Design/character

- Need to incorporate design that integrates with the village – to enable integration socially and reflection of the village's character.

Stanwick

- Loss of character.
- 150 homes tacked onto village and 'fenced' off – segregates development from the main village.
- Not involved in community spirit.
- Population 2000 + 150 – major addition. Built between 1996 – 2001. Belief of existing residents is that the development brought no provision of new facilities.
- Village has village shop, butchers, school (full to capacity).
- Nowhere for facilities to grow.

- School group & brownies meet in old school rooms.

Wadenhoe

- 6 houses in the village, but 3 stay empty due to eligibility – owned by housing trust.
- People come from around the country, but high turn around of residents within the trust homes.
- New comers often do not become part of the village and community.
- Services/facilities outlined in the report are incorrect.

Brigstock

- Young people have to move to surrounding areas of Corby, Kettering & Wellingborough.
- Generations of families have lived in the village.
- Commuters buy into the village.
- New houses - £500,000+.
- Youth problem is a perception rather than crime, but still impacts on quality of life.
- Village hall, cricket pavilion, youth club, cricket club – facilities good.
- Growth slow over the years – no large development – therefore happy with slow organic growth & social inclusion has been good. Also been good supply of different tenure and size of housing built in the village.
- Lots of one-off employment has started up – furniture maker, garden design, art worker – all working from home and most have moved into the area to work from home.

Collyweston

- About to loose garage/car showroom.
- Planning permission has been granted for housing.
- Villagers do not welcome more housing in the village and would prefer site used for employment use.
- Bringing employment into the village would encourage walking to work.
- Difficult to encourage economic development when housing land values are so much higher.
- Hard to keep community spirit when new people move into the village, who may not have come from a village background.
- Village school – derelict.

What sustainability means in rural areas and villages

- Consensus that sustainability is very important for rural areas, but recognition that the word 'sustainable' is overused.
- It is essential to take in the 'whole' picture including global sustainability e.g. climate change, transport as well as the local social, economic and environmental issues.
- What is the definition of a village?
- What and who are villages for?
- What should be the role of a village?
- Variation from village to village. But villages still have to have services/facilities/infrastructure.

Case study selection

- General consensus was agreed that Option 1 should be used for Stage 2 of the project. Agreement with Terry Begley and Karen Devonport on Option 1.
- Baker Associates to check villages to be used for case study work.
- Jo Russell (Countryside Agency) - I agree with your option 1. This will allow you to test the ideas in the Entec report that King's Cliffe should be a local service centre and that Oundle and King's Cliffe are on a rural services spine.

Other contacts we should speak to

Environmental:

- Jason Longhurst – Green Infrastructure Project & Regional Park
- Tina Cuss – Landscape Officer

Other:

- Welland Partnership
- Health organisations

Further baseline information to collect

Environmental:

- Landscape Character Assessment.
- Rights of Way Improvement Plan.
- Case study work that covers the environmental issues. Obtain relevant landscape character, biodiversity, water resources/flood risk data etc.

Access to community services:

- 'Creating Community Hubs' (Barry Graves) – funds projects for pensioners – community services. Work with Rockingham Forest Trust and ACRE. Getting villagers to help themselves.

Survey work

- Look at the focus of the village.
- What networks do people feel part of?
- Why do people move into a village?
- What are people's perceptions before moving into a village?
- What are people's thoughts once they have lived in the village for a while?
- Think about asking some environmental questions in the household survey.

Other information

Parish Council

- Meet every 3 months.
- Have a mountain of correspondence to get through at every meeting.

Joined up thinking

- Make people work together and strategy for the whole:
 - Roads
 - Education
 - Health
 - Waste
 - Water (drainage/flood)...

Next meeting

10.00 – 12.00

Wednesday 27th July 2005

Room CHG2

East Northamptonshire Council

Thrapston

Please **confirm to Sharon Jefferies** if you are able to attend.

You will receive an update to the project by Friday 22nd July 2005.

If you have any further comments in relation to the project between now and then, please do not hesitate to contact Sharon on sjefferies@bakerassocs.com or on **0117 933 8950**.

All comments welcome! Many thanks.

East Northamptonshire Council & Countryside Agency
Sustainable Rural Planning Policies
Stakeholder Meeting – Stage 2
 Wednesday 27 July 2005

Produced by Baker Associates

Attendees

Terry Begley	Planning Policy - ENDC	Cllr Robin Veit	Oundle Parish
Karen Devonport	Countryside Agency EM	Sue Roberts	Woodnewton Parish
Jo Russell	Countryside Agency	Kathy George	Economics – ENDC
John Baker	Baker Associates	Graham Dalley	Glaphorn Parish
Sharon Jefferies	Baker Associates	Mike Herring	Apethorpe Parish
Louise Cahill	Community Safety Assistant	Fiona Cowan	Collyweston Parish
Mr P Leach	Fineshade	John Richardson	ENDC
Karen Edwards	Rockingham Forest Trust	Micheal Day	King's Cliffe Parish
Felix Marsh	ACRE Rural Housing Enabler	Rob Southam	SERVE
Mike Deacon	Warmington Parish	Bernard Lock	Yarwell Parish
David Consent	Warmington Parish	Barry Graves	SERVE/ENVA
Derek Rowell	Warmington Parish	Derek Nickless	Housing – ENDC
Mrs A Webb	Warmington Parish	Mrs F Turner	Newton Bromswold Parish
Mrs Corker	Wadenhoe Parish Council	Karen Horner	Planning – ENDC & Joint Planning Unit
Mrs J Hodgson	Stanwick Parish		

Apologies

Mrs Terrie Watson	Community Safety Officer	Tom Grozdoski	Economics – ENDC
Lucy Hawes	Rural Transport - ENDC	Carolyn Turner	Rockingham Forest Trust
Mr Searle	Brigstock Parish		

Preparation

The Stakeholder Group were forwarded the Stage 2 report and appendices and asked to read this material in preparation of the Stage 2 meeting, in order to comment on the framework developed for sustainable rural policies, in Chapter 7 of the report.

Introduction to project

John Baker of Baker Associates presented an outline and findings of the project. A copy of the presentation is at the end of this meeting note.

Issues and information to inform sustainable rural policies

Services, shops, post office, schools

- Schools are important in retaining social inclusion, for people living in a settlement.
- Other social forums that need to be retained include pubs, churches and shops.
- Warmington: housing developed in village to retain schools and support local services/facilities in the past. Now informed there is a need to do it again, as children grow up and number decline, therefore threat of school closure once again.

Economic Development

- Do not retain employment land and buildings in rural areas solely for *local* employment use only. It is difficult to attract business to rural areas, therefore policy needs to encourage and promote to businesses from both in and outside the district.
- In most cases development of housing should match employment in a settlement.

Housing

- East Northamptonshire Council planning department – Choice Base Letting is a new way of delivering affordable housing.
- Make sure people are aware that they are eligible to affordable housing, through increased communications and partnership working.
- Southwick example: would welcome infill development to retain services and school. Villagers would like to keep young people in the village and at the moment they have to move out of the village to afford housing.
- Affordable housing needs to be available to people actually working in the village or already live in the village. Need to make sure affordable housing is provided for local people.
- There needs to be a distinction between providing housing on an individual basis (by dividing existing plots for example) and developing housing estates.
- Targets for next 20 years should not be met in one go – development should be piece-meal and developed over the target period, to provide organic growth in a village.

Design/character

- Often comments made on planning applications to Development Control department (on design) do not get incorporated into the final design of the scheme.
- Villages often end up with schemes that are poorly designed, out of scale, with inappropriate materials used. There is a requirement for stricter control on design, scale and materials used.
- Impression given that planning does not have the power to influence design at Development Control stage.
- There is a need to influence design, as it is not working at the moment. This needs to be through guidance, policy and at Development Control level.

Joint working

- Make sure strategies and programmes are brought together, through network of organisations and partnership working.
- Local Development Framework sets framework to have hooks for other partnerships and strategies to link to other relevant programmes.
- There are existing organisations and charities that are already working in partnership, which planning could link into.

Village 'plans'

- People who live in a village should have their say to what development occurs in their village.
- Parish Plans should be highly regarded.
- There was a general consensus that the parish councils should create a 'management' plan for their village.
- East Northamptonshire Council should ask for Parish Plans and supply criteria and a framework for what it should include and how to produce it. This should include identifying local need, opinions on environmental protection etc. This could also be used to inform other programmes and levels of government, e.g. county council level.
- Village Design Statements: there should be a strategy tool kit for villages to be able to develop them.

Other comments

- Need for more community involvement to inform decision-making in planning.
- Planning department has too much work, lack of resources and therefore needs to be strengthened.
- Overall feeling is Parish Councils are frustrated in what they can do and feel largely ignored.
- Concern about removing village boundaries, in relation to encroachment and development into the countryside.

What next...

- These comments and any others received will be considered for the final report. The final report will be presented to East Northamptonshire Council's planning policy department, as a direction for the forthcoming Local Development Document 'Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan' and into their programme developed for working in partnerships and community involvement.
- The report will also be used by the Countryside Agency, from the issues and outcomes from the report, to inform other rural districts in England, where applicable.

Attachments

- Slide presentation used in Stakeholder Group meeting 2.
- Survey used in case study area.

Contacts

If you were unable to attend the meeting or have any further comments please forward them to **Sharon Jefferies** by **Friday 12 August 2005**.

sjefferies@bakerassocs.com

Sharon Jefferies
Baker Associates
The Crescent Centre
Temple Back
Bristol BS1 6EZ

Slide
1 & 2

**Sustainable Rural
Planning**

East Northamptonshire Council Countryside Agency Baker Associates

Stakeholder Group Meeting – 27 July 2005

10.15	overview of project
10.30	group discussion
11.50	way forward
12.00	close

agenda

Slide
3 & 4

- research background
- national and regional policy
- existing local policy
- future Local Development Framework

research and policy

- identifying local issues and needs
 - community strategy
 - rural strategy – consultation responses
 - Joint Planning Unit rural workshop
 - ACRE housing needs surveys
 - planning policy 'Design for the Future' consultation
- this project
 - stakeholder group
 - resident survey

issues and needs

Slide
5 & 6

East Northamptonshire....rural issues

- lack of affordable housing
- poor public transport
- retaining services
- poor design / pressure on environment
- lack of employment opportunities
- anti-social behaviour

local issues

understanding rural issues

- settlement roles
- network / relationships between settlements
- community involvement – survey work

developing issues

Slide 7
& 8

roles & relationships of settlements

- hierarchy of settlements
 - Oundle
 - King's Cliffe
 - Warmington, Nassington
- dependent settlements
- network of settlements
- individual buildings

case study

framework for sustainable rural policies

- spatial strategy
- social
 - affordable housing
 - sustainable communities
 - access / transport
- employment
 - employment generating development
 - redundant buildings
 - recreation / tourism
- environment
 - natural
 - built

policy framework

Slide 9

- today's discussion
- final report
- Local Development Document ' Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan'
 - preferred options / proposals consultation: Nov-Dec 2005
 - adoption: July 2007
- Countryside Agency - rural policy

what next

