

# Letter from Fiskerton Parish Council to all residents

The Parish Council has been sent by WLDC, a petition that was submitted to WLDC by the residents of Fiskerton. West Lindsey sent the petition to us out of courtesy as they were unable to act upon it as they are not the body responsible for the Neighbourhood Plan. The petition requested that WLDC hold an extraordinary meeting to examine the content of the Neighbourhood Plan and insist on a re-ballot of all possible options which they were unable to do as it is not their plan.

At the PC meeting on 20.3.17 the petition was acknowledged as being received in the post on the 02/03/17, after the plan had been published. There also seems to be some confusion, with a number of residents reporting that they had been asked different questions to that which was submitted to WLDC. Although it had been sent to WLDC for action by WLDC, the Parish Council decided to produce an open letter to residents to answer some points raised by the petition and circulate it to all households so everyone has the facts to hand.

Before getting to the issues themselves it should be remembered the Neighbourhood Plan Group is made up of volunteers from throughout the village and not from any one area or background. It should also be noted that anything that was put in the NP had to be supported by evidence, usually from other bodies or created with the assistance of external professionals. In all cases this evidence is on the website.

Lastly thank you for taking the time to read this letter, there is an awful lot of information but it is important and it will enable you to make an informed decision. If you want further detail on anything please get in touch.

[www.fiskerton-lincs.org.uk](http://www.fiskerton-lincs.org.uk) Email - [Nplan@fiskerton-lincs.org.uk](mailto:Nplan@fiskerton-lincs.org.uk)

## **Responses to points made in the petition leaflet**

### **Point 1. At all public meetings a strong preference was made for development to the West.**

At the 6 open meetings prior to March 2016, developing to west was not mentioned. It was first mentioned at an open meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> March. At the NPG meeting 12.4.16 it was agreed by all that the area to the west of the village should be protected as green corridor. Cllr Darcel was present at that meeting and had prepared diagrams showing a green corridor to the west. At the same meeting it was also agreed that the preferred site for development was North of Ferry Road.

At the open meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2016 there was strong representation from residents to consider the west, no vote was taken as at that time the landowners, the Church Commissioners, were adamant that the land to the West was not available. It was not till early September that the CCs stated that the west could be considered and may be available at sometime in the future. As a result of this, options for both west and the north sites were further developed and during the public consultation through November and December both possible sites were presented. The results of this consultation, which are based on the responses provided by the residents, showed that they favoured the option North of Ferry Road as did the professional consultees. This evidence is available on the website.

### **Point 2. Verbal communication indicates a preference for building in the West.**

This is rather subjective and it depends on who you talk to. The factual evidence based on the information given above has influenced the NPG. The aim is to produce a plan that meets the majority of the residents' wishes.

### **Point 3. Building to the North will increase flooding and traffic problems in the village.**

Lincolnshire County Council, Anglian Water and the Environment Agency assessed both the West and the North. In their view both sites offer equal potential problems. Their assessments are on the website. In the plan, these issues are addressed in Section 7 'Roads and Transport policy N° 5' and Section 9 'Flooding policy N° 7' to give protection against these events.

#### **Point 4. Not all options for development have been equally presented by the NPG.**

All possible options were given due consideration and were examined by independent professionals. Their findings are presented in the Site Selection Document and the Sustainability Appraisal. Both documents are available on the website.

#### **Point 5. The impact of the Plan has not been presented to the public.**

We have been told that the amount of consultation undertaken is well above the average for Neighbourhood Plans in Lincolnshire and elsewhere generally. Frequent updates of NPG activities have been reported in the Parish News and at Parish Council meetings. The meetings referred to in point 1 and the list of "Consultation Activities Undertaken by the NDP Group" presented in the Plan show the level of communication with the public.

#### **Point 6. Ballot and consultation results have not been made available.**

The ballot responses collected on 16.8.16 were in favour of development to the North of Ferry Road so this option was taken forward into the Plan. These were published on the website, on Facebook and in the Parish news.

The results of the consultation that ended on December 20<sup>th</sup> 2016 have been placed on the website. Unfortunately the petition was produced before the consultation data had been fully processed. When results were finalised and became available they were published on the website.

#### **Point 7. The Paddock has repeatedly been used as a bartering tool.**

The Paddock has been on the wish list of the village for a very long time. Residents have repeatedly expressed their desire for it to be accessible and the Parish council has for many years tried to achieve this for the village. When in November 2014 the Church Commissioners presented plans to build on the paddock, the reaction of the residents and the Parish Council, together with the then new draft Neighbourhood Plan caused the CCs and WLDC to withdraw that proposal. The paddock is now a protected Green Space in our Neighbourhood Plan and in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan but not accessible to the public.

During 2015/16 there were various meetings with the PC, CC and WLDC to discuss possible planning gain for the residents that may be associated with development outlined in the plan. Planning gain is an additional benefit granted by a developer **over and above** their statutory requirements. The PC insisted any planning gain for the residents should include acquiring the paddock as a community asset with access for the public.

#### **Final thoughts**

Do we have to have a plan? No, but without a plan the village has to rely on the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan and we will not have as much say on location, style, quantity and preferred planning gain as we would have with a plan.

Not having a plan does not mean there would be no building to the North, unfortunately it would mean that all sites would be available so that in time, there would possibly be building on the North, the West and possibly elsewhere too.

Not having a plan does not mean there would only be 90 houses in the village, that number comes from the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan and it is the anticipated growth. It is not a maximum number and developers are not constrained by it as they want to make their projects viable, sustainable and profitable.

With a plan, the community will benefit from approx 14.5% open space for new developments and that rises to 26% if the Paddock is acquired. Without a plan that figure is just 10%. The Community infrastructure Levy will generate an average of £2400 for each house for WLDC. Of this, with a NDP the parish would receive 25% per dwelling = £600 and without a NDP the parish would receive 15% per dwelling = £360.

Finally and most importantly, remember, it is your vote and your choice when the referendum arrives to either accept or reject the plan.

Thank you for your time and patience. Andrew Cooke, Chairman of Fiskerton Parish Council. 21.3.17