



Report To: Planning Portfolio Holder's Meeting
Lead Officer: Director, Planning and New Communities

9 September 2014

Neighbourhood Plans: Histon and Impington Area Designation

Purpose

1. To make a decision regarding the application to designate part of the parish of Histon and Impington as a Neighbourhood Area (see Appendix A).
2. This not a key decision and the Planning Portfolio Holder has delegated authority to make decisions on Neighbourhood Planning matters.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that the Planning Portfolio Holder
 - (a) delegates authority to the Director, Planning and New Communities, to approve the Histon and Impington Area Designation following the closure of the consultation on 12 September assuming there are no objections received.
 - (b) makes a decision outside of a meeting, which can be subject to call-in, if any objections are received.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. There are currently no objections to the application to designate part of the parish of Histon and Impington as a Neighbourhood Area. A delegated officer decision, assuming there are no objections received, will ensure that a timely decision is made and allow the parish to progress the development of their Neighbourhood Plan. If any objections are received a record of decision completed by the Portfolio Holder outside of a meeting, which can be subject to call-in, would also ensure that the parish is able to progress more swiftly than waiting for the next Portfolio Holder meeting on 18 November 2014.

Background

5. A neighbourhood area must be designated before a parish council can prepare a neighbourhood plan. There are national regulations guiding how this designation should be carried out and in the Cabinet Report of 8 May 2014 the approach, that South Cambridgeshire District Council is to use is set out as follows:
 - (a) Parishes are asked to complete the 'application for area designation' form, which can be found at www.scambs.gov.uk/neighbourhood-planning. The form asks questions about the proposed area and the early consultation that the parish has undertaken.
 - (b) The Council, as the Local Planning Authority (LPA), must publicise and consult on the application for not less than six-weeks. The form of consultation to be guided by its normal practice for development plan documents and supplementary planning documents as set out in its adopted statement of community involvement (SCI).

- (c) The Council takes representations into consideration and decides whether to designate the area. This decision has been delegated to the Planning Portfolio Holder.
- (d) Following designation, the Council publicises its decision on its website, including the name of the parish council(s) nominating it, and a map showing the area.

Considerations

6. Histon and Impington Parish Council have decided they would like to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for their area. They have applied to the Council for the majority of their parish to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area supplying a map of the area to be designated, and a statement explaining why the area should be designated. The consultation was extended to last for longer than 6 weeks so as to take into account the fact that part of the consultation has been during August when many people are away and unable to make comments. (4 July 2014 – 12 September 2014).
7. Consultation on the area application was undertaken by the District Council as required, with support from the parish:
 - (a) Prior to the application for area designation, the parish council held open meetings to discuss proposals for, and requirements of, a Neighbourhood Plan for the area.
 - (b) Discussions were held between Histon and Impington Parish Council and community members to determine which areas were in and out of scope for the Neighbourhood Area application.
 - (c) The application letter and associated area map from Histon and Impington Parish Council, which includes a statement of why the area should be designated, was published on the District Council's website on Friday 4 July 2014 and gave a closing date of 12 September 2014. Representations could be submitted on the consultation in a number of ways, namely via the online consultation system, by email or post. A link to the consultation was also added to the front page of the website to make people aware of it
 - (d) The application to designate the Histon and Impington Neighbourhood Area was available during this period at the District Council offices and at the Parish Council Office, Histon and Impington Recreation Ground, New Road, Impington, Cambridge, CB24 9LU.
 - (e) The Council consulted with all the Specific and relevant General Consultees that are used for Local Plan consultations.
 - (f) The Council wrote to all parish councils within a three mile buffer zone of the boundary with Histon and Impington Parish as well as Cambridge City and Cambridgeshire County Councils.
 - (g) With assistance from the Parish Council, the Council also contacted local groups, businesses, landowners and schools in order to meet the requirement to bring the consultation to the attention of people who live, work or carry out business in the proposed Neighbourhood Area.
 - (h) The District Council issued a press release regarding the consultation on 21 July 2014.
 - (i) Posters were displayed across the proposed Neighbourhood Area in key locations throughout the consultation period.
 - (j) The Parish Council also included the consultation on their website.
 - (k) An item advertising the consultation was placed in the Planning Policy monthly update, which goes out to all parishes across the district.

8. Six representations have been received to date, none objecting to the area designation. Although the consultation is yet to close, this is considered to be a good rate of response given that it was not a consultation on a NP itself with policies and proposed site allocations. Of the representations received so far Sport England, Natural England and the Woodland Trust have all offered general support to neighbourhood planning and web links to relevant advice they have to assist parish councils in preparing a plan. The representations received between 4 July 2014 and 29 August 2014 are attached as Appendix B.
9. At this point in time there is clear local support for the proposed area designation and the application is considered valid. There are no planning reasons to refuse the application. The part of the parish excluded from the Neighbourhood Area is detached from the remainder of the parish by the A14 and more closely relates to the urban area of Cambridge. Note that if it is decided that the application to designate should be refused that reasons have to be given for the refusal. The NPPG advises that the Council should avoid pre-judging what a parish council may decide to put in its neighbourhood plan.

Options

10. The Portfolio Holder could
 - (a) delegate authority to the Director, Planning and New Communities, to approve the Histon and Impington Area Designation following the closure of the consultation on 12 September assuming there are no objections received,
 - (b) make a decision outside of a meeting, which can be subject to call-in, if any objections are received, or
 - (c) defer a decision on the application to designate part of the parish of Histon and Impington as a Neighbourhood Area until the next Planning Portfolio Holder Meeting on 18 November 2014.

Implications

11. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

Financial

12. Local planning authorities are able to claim for up to 20 area designations (£100,000) in each financial year. In the 2014/15 financial year, claims can be made at the end of each quarter. For all areas, the basic level of funding per NP is £30,000, to be paid for which £5,000 can be claimed for designation of a Neighbourhood Area.

Separate support is available for communities.

<http://mycommunityrights.org.uk/neighbourhood-planning/direct-support/>

Legal

13. The Planning Portfolio Holder has delegated authority to make decisions on Neighbourhood Planning matters.

Staffing

14. Initially support for neighbourhood planning will be delivered within existing resources by the Planning Policy Team and the Sustainable Communities and Partnerships Team, drawing upon the expertise of other staff as required. Depending on demand,

and other work priorities, the Council may need to revisit the level of advice and guidance available to parishes or consider additional resources in the future.

Equality and Diversity

15. Equality and diversity issues will be considered during the preparation of the NP as appropriate to its content.

Climate Change

16. Climate change issues will be considered during the preparation of the NP as appropriate to its content.

Consultation responses (including from the Youth Council)

17. Consultation responses on the proposed neighbourhood area are set out in Appendix B.

Effect on Strategic Aims

Aim 1 - Engagement: engage with residents, parishes and businesses to ensure we deliver first class services and value for money

18. Neighbourhood planning engages local people in the planning process by giving them a tool to guide the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. Parish councils lead on the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans and local residents and businesses are engaged throughout the process.

Background Papers

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

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